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ABSTRACT

Prepared to support the efforts of a series of international conferences on the economic and social status of women, this report focuses on Latin American and Caribbean issues and reviews conference directives and goals. Calling attention to the difficulties relating to the evaluation of the status of women, the report mentions the political and social changes which have occurred in the region and which make the situation more complicated. The indicators that are available concerning achievements made by women during the past decades are reviewed. The report discusses the main obstacles to the integration of women, reviews some aspects of planning and social policies, and makes some remarks on the future, including the possible updating of the Regional Plan of Action on the Integration of Women into the Economic and Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean. (SY)

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Havana, Cuba, 19-23 November 1984

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE APPRAISAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS DECADE FOR WOMEN AND TO THE DESIGN OF STRATEGIES FOR THE FUTURE

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/Summary

Summary

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE APPRAISAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS DECADE FOR WOMEN AND TO THE DESIGN OF STRATEGIES FOR THE FUTURE

This study has been especially prepared for the Regional Meeting for Latin America and the Caribbean in Preparation for the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, as a contribution to the deliberations to be held on this topic at the meeting. The document also constitutes a supplement to the other reports prepared by ECLAC as contributions to the diagnosis of the position of women in Latin America and the Caribbean and to the orientation of policies designed to improve their Status.

The first part contains a review of the main background information on the topic in the region and of the directives concerning the mandates. Particular significance is attached to the contextual differences existing at the beginning of the Decade and those at present, which are related to the severe crisis experienced by the region. However, it is notable that in the response made by the Regional Plan of Action, an official action instrument of the Secretariat, to the broad objectives of the social development of Latin America and the Caribbean, the basic objectives are still valid and remain in force, although some new issues have to be added and different priorities and emphasis assigned.

Attention is also called in this part to the difficulties relating to the evaluation of the status of women. The explanations already given in documents submitted to previous conferences are repeated and explanations of the great changes which have occurred in the region and which make its situation more complicated are added.

This study has been prepared on the basis of the recommendations made in the Regional Plan of Action, the second and third Regional Conferences on the Integration of Women in the Economic and Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean, the guidelines provided by the officers of those Conferences and the various specific mandates delivered by the relevant bodies.

The study makes an overall examination of the indicators available concerning the achievements made in respect of the incorporation of women into the labour force and education, their access to health care, the main changes occurring at the legal level and other important governmental programmes.

Attention is drawn to the problems originating in the adjustment programmes which usually affect the social programmes and have a repercussion on families, especially those with few resources.

Among the obstacles to the integration of women, importance is attached to those due to traditional socialization, i.e., to the ways in which women are given access to education, to social participation and to the labour market. An analysis is also made of the progress achieved in this connection and the difficulties

/which exist

which exist in connection with the determination of the extent to which the changes derive from urban development and the modernization of the society and to what extent they are due to the implementation of action provided for in the Regional Plan of Action for the Integration of Women in the Economic and Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean adopted by the governments of the region in Havana in 1977.

The third chapter contains a provisional outline of the probable climate in the region and a review is made of some of the central aspects of planning and social policies with regard to the status of women.

The fourth chapter contains some thoughts concerning the questions to which the up-dating of the Regional Plan of Action might give rise. Attention is drawn to their importance in conscience-raising in the region concerning the status of women, and emphasis is placed on the need to apply new solutions within a concept of equality of development and growing and effective participation of women as social actors. In this respect, attention is drawn to the profound change which has been experienced by Latin America and the Caribbean in the past few decades, the severity of the crisis affecting the region and to regional integration and solidarity as key components of the new strategies, in which the presence of organized groups of women is already a reality. Attention is drawn finally to the fact that the present crisis has aggravated social conflicts and problems, which makes it indispensable to provide for a review of the overall situation with a view to the construction of a different social order, based on equity, autonomy and growth.

The twentieth session of ECLAC (Lima, April 1984) reaffirmed the recommendations made by the Third Regional Conference on the Integration of Women in the Economic and Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean, taking into consideration, among other key items, that the International Development Strategy for the United Nations Third Development Decade could not achieve its objectives and the goals proposed without effective participation by women in national, regional and international efforts. It was also emphasized at the Conference that the severe crisis experienced by the region has resulted in a deterioration in the quality of life of a high percentage of the population, and note was taken of the vital importance of the policies of governments at national level to achieve the effective participation of women in development, taking into consideration the announcement of the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace (resolution 468 (XX)). On this basis, the Secretariat has carried out activities aimed at two global objectives: to consolidate the topic of the integration of women in the region and to ensure that it remains in the appropriate programmes in view of the fact that the United Nations Decade for Women is soon to end.

Among the main activities designed to reach these goals, which are part of an overall regional plan for review and appraisal corresponding to the second half of the Decade as envisaged in resolution No. 1 of the Third Regional Conference, the Secretariat organized a meeting of the Group of Experts on the Strategies for the Advancement of Women to the year 2000, jointly with the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs; a technical seminar on women in the mass urban sector, and, in the same framework of concern for vulnerable groups of women,

/a study

a study on the status of rural women, with consideration being given to the holding of a more comprehensive women's meeting on the issue in 1985. At the same time, and on the basis of the same recommendations and with a view to the forthcoming conference on youth, studies relating to the topic of young women in Latin America and the CAribbean have been initiated.

This study, prepared in part with contributions from advisors, constitutes a special contribution to the deliberations of the Regional Meeting, the situation for Latin America and the Caribbean Preparatory to the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace. The study which is predominantly analytical and reflective is largely based on the review of the questionnaires sent to governments by the United Nations and supplements studies previously carried out by the Secretariat as a contribution to the appraisals and diagnoses made. In this connection attention is drawn in particular to two papers 1/ and to the documents prepared for the Third Regional Conference.2/

Introduction

The systematic studies made on the status of women in Latin America and the Caribbean were begun in ECLAC on the basis of the resolutions adopted at the fifteenth session of the Commission (Quito, 1973). In addition to diagnosing the living conditions of women, these studies attached importance to the design and orientation of measures aimed at overcoming discrimination at all levels. From that time until the present, many studies have been made and governmental, technical and academic meetings held which have led to greater understanding of the issue and to action proposals in respect to it.

A meeting of particular relevance was the World Conference of the International Women's Year (Mexico City, 1975), which prepared the Declaration of Mexico on the Equality of Women and their Contribution to Development and Peace, which was prepared in conjunction with the World Plan of Action for the Implementation of the Objectives of the International Women's Year and the Regional Plans of Action for the region covered by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and for the region covered by the Economic Commission for Africa.

At regional level, the first Regional Conference on the Integration of Women in the Economic and Social Development of Latin America (Havana, 1977) adopted the Regional Plan of Action for the Integration of Women in the Economic and Social Development of Latin America, the contents of which were oriented towards the work to be done by governments and the Secretariat during the Decade. The second Regional Conference (Macuto, Venezuela, 1975) appraised the state of affairs at that point and supplemented the recommendations made in the Regional Plan of Action on the basis of the review which had been made.

The World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace (Copehagen, 1980) for its part appraised the results of the first half of the Decade and prepared the Programme of Action for the Second Half of the United Nations Decade for Women, which is based on the review and appraisal of the progress achieved during the first five years of the Decade in the light of the obstacles encountered in the application of the 1975 Plan.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, the orientation of the action in this period has been assisted by recommendations made by the officers of the Regional Conferences on the Integration of Women in the Economic and Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean (Kingston, Jamaica, 1978; Mexico City, 1978; Quito, 1979; Quito, 1981; Mexico City, 1983).

The third Regional Conference on the Integration of Women in the Economic and Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean (Mexico City, August 1983) recommended in its resolution No.1, entitled "Some guidelines for regional and national actions aimed at improving the status of women", that ECLAC,

Considering that despite the progress made, there remain profound social inequities and discriminatory values obstructing women's integration into development,

/Taking into

Taking into account that the present crisis being undergone by the region, aggravated by international economic problems, has an especially serious effect on the participation of women in this integration,

Recognizing women as protagonists in the quest for new styles of development and as agents of innovative change in the direction of more just forms of social organization,

Convinced that the solving of current problems constitutes a challenge to the region which requires the establishment of new formulas based on democracy and participation of women promoting solidarity and friendship among the countries of the region,

a) continue to conduct research and prepare studies and diagnoses aimed at providing more in-depth knowledge of the situation of women in the region, especially as regards their dual relationship with the family structure and with the conditions and incentives created for their participation in education, health, employment and social and political organizations, and with special emphasis on young women, with a view to the forthcoming Regional Meeting on Youth;

b) disseminate amongst the countries of the region the results of its studies directed towards the establishment of the relevant policy guidelines;

c) consider, in consultation with the governments, the possibility of preparing national, subregional or regional programmes for training and providing skills to women, with special emphasis on education, employment and health;

d) continue its activities in the training of middle- and high-level technical personnel for the countries, with a view to the exchange of experience, the establishment of methodologies and the inclusion of the situation of women in global social development programmes;

e) stress the need to prepare a general plan of regional review and appraisal corresponding to the second half of the Decade.

/I. FRAME

I. FRAME OF REFERENCE

In other documents attention has been drawn to factors which make it highly difficult to appraise the progress made in connection with the integration of women in development, and an in-depth analysis has been made of the difficulties relating to the kind of resources available for measuring their living conditions.3/ Without repeating the arguments used, it would be a good idea to draw attention to problems which have been added to or have aggravated problems which were already present in connection with the possibilities for making a more exhaustive appraisal. In the first place, there is a much wider variety of national situations due to the interaction of differences in basic contexts, differences in size and economic potential and differences in respect of the time in which the different development processes have been in effect. Actually, generalizations on Latin American change are becoming less and less relevant and harder and harder to uphold, and the task involved in making a comparative analysis of very diverse national situations is becoming difficult. National situations are growing increasingly complex, and relations among social groups and between them and the State are increasingly less clear and more diversified.

Finally, generalizations concerning the region are equally affected by the problem of unknown quantitites presented nowadays by the process of transformation and the political economies of the great industrial centres and hence of the form which relations between them and the Latin American centres might take in the future. This does not detract from the importance of the task of working on the basis of assumptions and alternative medium- and long-term scenarios and of advancing on the basis of a consensus concerning the design of a new development pattern.

In addition, in spite of the fact that the big structural changes made in the region are now nearly 30-years old, the context in which the United Nations Decade for Women began and the context in which it is ending are outstandingly different. Actually, when the Regional Plan of Action was adopted in Havana in 1977, there were still signs of optimism and growth in the region, and this is no longer the case. It is therefore assumed:

i) That, in a context in which resources were relatively abundant, governments and bilateral and multilateral assistance bodies would be interested in supporting the populations in its attempts to meet its basic needs and the gradual incorporation of marginated groups of the society, which, in some cases, included women and the low-income groups of the population.

ii) That with a certain amount of political will on the part of the governments, these intentions would be reflected in the plans, programmes, projects and political measures needed if they were to be suitably implemented.

iii) That the objectives adopted with respect to greater participation by women in the development process would be reflected in a series of concrete measures in favour of their participation in different areas and sectors.

/iv) That,

iv) That, in view of the fact that for many years our economies were fortunate enough to enjoy sustained growth, social expenditure on programmes which indirectly favour the participation of women, such as programmes designed in support of the family, children and youth, would continue to rise.

However, even then, there was some concern as regards the following circumstances:

i) The lack of adequate information, as a result both of a faulty approach to the collection of statistical data and of a lack of rigorous research.

ii) The organizational and administrative difficulties of the institutions responsible for the implementation of recent social programmes.

iii) The lack of continuity of many of the initiatives taken with respect to the groups which benefit from the policies, which results in a loss of experience and of the know-how concerning the complex processes of social intervention.

iv) The lack of understanding at that time concerning the importance of attitudes and values, the patterns of behaviour and the cultural motivations and processes inherent in the development process.

v) The lack of foresight concerning the depth and extension of the crisis which would strike the Latin American and Caribbean region.

However, although structural obstacles have now arisen which are more dramatic and difficult to control than anything which could have been foreseen at the beginning of the Decade, the regional action programme was directed toward the solution of the main problems identified as being of a structural nature, and although there may have been changes in emphasis and new issues may have arisen, basically the objectives of integrating women into economic and social development laid down at that time seem still to be in force. It is likely that the problems of equity, in view of the deterioration in the living conditions of large social sectors, is now more relevant than before and also that there is greater critical awareness concerning the problems relating to the subordination of women.

Thus this study is built around two main themes: on the one hand, the crisis, as an overall setting which involves all the processes, and, on the other, the search for key ideas for the establishment of new plans and orientations with respect to the development of the region.

The study is set up within the framework of the crisis, as one of the main landmarks of the second half of the Decade. Actually, the present crisis has its roots in the first half of the 1970s and in the petroleum crises, it cannot be denied that it became more severe around the beginning of the 1980s, when it took on dimensions the like of which had not been seen since the 1930s. This crisis, which is linked to internal factors is, for its part, closely linked to external factors whose origin lies in the behaviour of the economies of the industrialized countries. The extension of the crisis (in varying degrees of severity in each of the countries of the region) and its duration are, in real terms, responsible for a significant economic contraction, some destruction or underutilization of accumulated capital and substantial setbacks in social progress.

/A feeling

A feeling of instability, confusion and uncertainty concerning the way in which events will develop and what policy should be adopted to contain and overcome the pernicious effects of this process has become widespread. The negotiations carried out and arrangements made with respect to external indebtedness and to debt servicing have not succeeded in stabilizing the situation, and in some cases the problems really cannot be overcome by conventional methods and formulas.

These crisis-related developments have differed in both absolute and relative intensity in different national settings, from one country to another, depending on its economic and demographic size, its degree of external openness, the nature and depth of State intervention in the management of the economic policy and the participation of the State as an economic agent, the availability of resources and the degree of industrialization and diversification or production and technology.

In addition, the way in which the countries of the region have moved from the period of economic boom to the present crisis has not been the same either. In this respect, it should, for example, be borne in mind that the petroleum-exporting countries have not developed in the same way as the non-petroleum-exporting countries and that the development of the countries with high growth rates has been different from that of the larger group of countries which traditionally have shown less dynamism.

The crisis has intensified the deterioration of social conditions in the Latin American countries, and one of the groups which has undoubtedly been most affected has been the women in the mass urban and rural sectors of the region. On the one hand, the adjustment programmes have primarily affected those sectors, especially with respect to the reduction of social policies directed to education, health and housing and have led to a weakening in the social welfare system. On the other hand, although the women in these strata have had to engage more heavily in paid employment, they have entered those jobs with lower wages, mostly in the informal sector and on the basis of a double workday. Similarly, it is very likely that the crisis has had negative effects on the employment of workers from other strata due to the fact that the labour market has necessarily contracted. In general, the crisis creates a climate of stagnation and recession, in which social tension is greater and social instability more intense.

In this context, it is important to bear in mind that the theoretical framework in which development policies should be placed in the future must first of all take into consideration the effects of the crisis and secondly the need to rethink certain aspects which seem to be most relevant in the development process. In an analysis of this type, the socio-economic aspects must be taken in combination with a valid ethical and cultural view of society. In this respect it is worthwhile drawing attention to that part of the Quito Declaration in which it is stated that development must be seen as an integral process characterized

/by the

by the achievement of economic and social objectives and goals which ensure the actual participation of the population in the development process and in its benefits, for which reason it becomes necessary to make profound structural changes in this setting as a prerequisite to the establishment of the type of integral development sought. For the achievement of this objective, the integral participation of women at a level of economic, political and cultural equality is considered indispensable.

From this perspective, development should aim at at least three objectives: greater efficiency in the economy, greater equity in the distribution of the fruits of growth and more autonomy in the processes of development. Other central themes should include the modernization of the State, which should support the objectives of social policies more emphatically; emphasis on planning and the formulation of social policies aiming at greater equity.

/II. EVALUATING

II. EVALUATING THE PROCESS

This study is based on a comprehensive review of the available indicators concerning achievements in the area of incorporation into the work force, education, health and other government programmes which directly or indirectly promote women, in the framework of the guidelines set forth by the RPA and concerning changes of a legal nature. However, despite repeated recommendations, available information is still scarce and limited, for which reason it is nearly impossible to make an evaluation in the traditional way, i.e., category by category, objective or goal, through contrasting of a normative principle with the actual situation expressed in data or in analytical categories that are comparable in time and space.

Because of this limitation, it is advisable to complete the comprehensive view of the problem with two qualitative elements which illustrate women's situation more specifically: a brief analysis of the family as the object of social policy and an attempt to construct a typology of women, based on socio-economic level.

A. IMPACT OF SECTORAL POLICIES

The first evaluation carried out by the Second Regional Conference on the Integration of Women in the Development of Latin America (Macuto, Venezuela, 1979) showed that the economic expansion which had occurred in the region had not managed to create all the employment necessary to absorb the growing labour force, so that the open unemployment rates continued to be relatively high, that is, above 6%. This figure, however, represents an impressive effort to create new urban jobs, many of which are concentrated in the tertiary sector of the economy.

Furthermore, the available information at that time indicated a contraction in the labour market, with open unemployment rates of around 8% and much higher in some Latin American cities. Therefore, the stagnation had had an influence on the expansion of employment and the level and quality of life of the population.

The consequences of this situation were serious: an increase in the poor sectors, deterioration of the real wage of those who were still working, influence on family consumption and therefore on effective demand, a regressive distribution of income and a difficult situation for young people and for women, who had recently joined the work force.

Available data indicated that the average rate of participation by women remained at around 20% for the region, a figure which was much lower than those of other regions; in other words, the potential for incorporation had been affected by the stagnation and the crisis.

It is a well-known fact that during recessive phases, employers tend to lay off women and young people first; there is also an emergence of employment in the home, manual labour and cottage labour performed in the home for commercial sale,

/for the

for the purpose of improving the family's income. Therefore, despite the progress achieved in certain countries, an increase in employment of women will continue to be an objective yet to be reached during the Decade.

Furthermore, problems persist concerning discriminatory treatment in the area of wages and types of jobs for women, more in private activity than the public sector, in which, in several countries, women have been holding important supervisory positions for many years.

With regard to recognition of work in the home, interesting research has been carried out in some countries on the value of that work and the possibility of incorporating it into national accounts, but it has not yet been possible to develop a unified approach to this subject.

In the area of education, the majority of the countries have made substantial progress in decreasing illiteracy and increasing rates of school attendance.

Despite the progress achieved, however, the situation continues to be critical in the relatively less developed countries, where illiteracy rates higher than 30% of the population still exist. Women and the rural population have traditionally been affected by this problem, despite the changes; this phenomenon persists independently of the level of development of a country.

Figures show that the incorporation of girls and young women into the educational system is growing. Rates of school attendance by sex indicate progress in that area. Between 1970 and 1980, in 16 of the 25 countries for which primary level information is available, female rates tended to approach or equal male rates, such as in Argentina and Venezuela, where there was no difference between the two figures. In Colombia, Jamaica, Nicaragua and Trinidad and Tobago, the female rate exceeded the male rate, a trend which has been confirmed at the intermediate level, with the exception of Mexico and Bolivia (see table 1).

The growing incorporation into primary and elementary educational levels could be reflecting a substantial change in attitudes and values of parents regarding education of women, in those countries of the region in which it had traditionally been considered that women needed less formal education, since their role as mothers, wives and housewives could be performed without a substantial amount of education. Men, on the contrary, as their families' breadwinners, had to acquire the skills necessary for their subsequent performance in the labour market.

Like all processes of change, this incorporation of women into education exhibits limitations which are especially noticeable at the third level, to which women have acceded not only in small numbers, but in a selective way, with a high concentration in areas of study that are considered to be "women's areas", which over time have tended to become "feminized", such as educational sciences, social sciences and health sciences. Thus in recent years female enrollment in fields such as the medical field has increased substantially in several countries in the region. Although female enrollment has increased in engineering and basic sciences, the number of women enrolled in these fields is still considerably lower than the number of men.

/Table 1

Table 1

LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN: PROPORTION OF WOMEN IN TOTAL TEACHING STAFF AND STUDENTS ENROLLED BY COUNTRY, 1970-1980

Country	Year	Women/students enrolled			Women/teaching staff		
		Level			Level		
		1st	2nd	3rd	1st	2nd	3rd
Antigua and Barbuda	1970	48	-	-	83	-	-
	1975	49	52 (76)	-	85	63	-
	1980	49 (78)	42 (77)	-	86 (78)	-	-
Barbados	1970	49	-	46	-	-	-
	1975	50	52	-	-	-	-
	1980	50	53 (81)	54	-	-	28
Bermuda	1970	50	54	-	85	52	-
	1975	48	-	53 (78)	-	-	-
	1980	49	50 (79)	51	88	-	33
Caiman Islands	1970	53 (71)	-	-	-	-	-
	1975	49	53	-	84	52	-
	1980	49	48	-	85	55	-
Costa Rica	1970	49	51	44	75	47	-
	1975	49	52	-	-	-	-
	1980	49	53	-	78 (81)	54 (81)	-
Cuba	1970	49	-	39	-	-	-
	1975	48	49	-	72	47	-
	1980	48	50	48	77 (81)	48	-
Dominica	1970	48	-	-	-	-	-
	1975	48	59	-	71	-	-
	1980	49 (78)	59 (78)	51	69 (78)	-	54
El Salvador	1970	48	47	-	70	32	17
	1975	48	44	34	68	-	23
	1980	50	52 (81)	31	67 (81)	27	23
Grenada	1970	49	46	-	58	44	-
	1975	48	-	50 (78)	-	-	52 (78)
	1980	48	-	60 (75)	71 (79)	-	25 (79)
Guatemala	1970	44	41	19	65	32	-
	1975	45	46	23	62	38	-
	1980	45	45	27 (78)	-	-	-
Haiti	1970	-	-	-	57 (71)	-	-
	1975	46 (78)	-	24	-	-	12
	1980	46	-	23 (78)	49	-	10 (78)
Honduras	1970	50	47	-	-	-	-
	1975	49	-	34	-	-	-
	1980	50	50	38	74	48	3
Jamaica	1970	50	-	-	-	-	-
	1975	50	54	-	-	-	-
	1980	50	53	-	87	-	-
Mexico	1970	48	39	20	61	-	-
	1975	48	39	-	62	33	-
	1980	49	47	34 (81)	-	-	-
Nicaragua	1970	50	47	32	79	-	-
	1975	51	50	34	-	-	-
	1980	51	54	47 (82)	79 (81)	-	-
Panama	1970	48	52	43	80	56	21
	1975	48	52	50	81	55	-
	1980	48	52	55	80	53	30 (81)
St. Lucia	1970	52	47	-	-	-	-
	1975	49	-	41 (78)	83 (78)	-	-
	1980	51	55	-	80	-	-
St. Vincent	1970	49	50	-	47	-	-
	1975	49	59	88 (78)	43	43	59 (78)
	1980	49	59 (81)	78 (79)	62 (81)	-	63 (79)
Argentina	1970	49	53	43	92	32	61
	1975	49	52	48	92	63	39
	1980	49 (81)	53 (81)	47 (82)	92	64 (78)	56 (82)
Bolivia	1970	41	-	-	-	-	-
	1975	44	-	-	-	-	-
	1980	47	46 (81)	-	48	-	-
Brazil	1970	50 (71)	51	38	84 (71)	53	21
	1975	49	53	-	85	-	-
	1980	49 (79)	54 (78)	-	87 (79)	53 (78)	-
Chile	1970	50	53	38	69	-	-
	1975	49	53	45	74	50	-
	1980	49	53	43	74 (79)	52 (79)	-
Colombia	1970	50	49	27	77	-	-
	1975	51	50	-	-	-	14
	1980	50	53 (81)	46 (81)	79	42	21 (81)
Ecuador	1970	48	45	30	64	33	7
	1975	49	48	-	65	36	-
	1980	49	49 (79)	35 (78)	66 (79)	37 (79)	-
Guyana	1970	49	51	30	55	46	-
	1975	49	51	36	69	-	30 (78)
	1980	49	-	40 (79)	70	-	-
Paraguay	1970	47	50	42	-	58	-
	1975	47	50	-	-	-	-
	1980	48 (79)	-	44 (78)	-	-	-
Peru	1970	46	43	34	-	-	15
	1975	-	-	32	-	-	14
	1980	48	46	-	60	-	-
Suriname	1970	48	54	-	62	47	-
	1975	48	55	12	65	50	3 (77)
	1980	48	52 (78)	35 (77)	76 (78)	54 (78)	-
Uruguay	1970	48	53	-	-	-	-
	1975	49	53	-	-	-	23
	1980	49	53	56 (82)	-	-	30
Venezuela	1970	50	51	41	86	39	18
	1975	49	53	-	-	-	-
	1980	49 (81)	48 (81)	-	83 (81)	50 (79)	-

Source: UNESCO, Statistical Yearbook, 1983.

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With regard to the relationship between work and education, the data available through the mid-1970s reflect an improvement in the educational level of the work force, both male and female. In the case of women, they have become incorporated into the tertiary sector of the economy, in areas where professional training did not necessarily require completion of the formal educational cycle; thus a high number of young people complete their education after leaving school by participating in the "parasystem" and in correspondence courses or adult education.

The greater education and professional training of women not only represents greater opportunity of access to the labour market, but implies far-reaching psychosocial changes; among these, the security provided by possessing skills which enable them to generate the resources necessary to maintain a family, no longer as a complementary wage but as the main income. In many households this phenomenon has changed the traditional relationship of subordination of the wife to the husband for economic reasons.

There is no doubt that incorporation of women into education and work has been the result of many factors. One of these factors, which is by no means negligible, has been the change of attitude brought about by greater information concerning society as a whole, which reflects forces such as the influence of communications media, transculturation, urbanization and the results of the implementation of social policies which have improved the welfare of the different groups making up society.

Among those policies those which appear to have the most influence on the social performance of women are the extension of social coverage as a result of the prevailing welfare-oriented health policy, the implementation of nutritional programmes directed towards low-income families in different countries, family planning programmes, mother-child care and the extension of infant-care services.

As for the services suggested in various papers to facilitate the participation of women, reduction of expenditures in the social area has limited the expansion of interesting experiments in the area of nurseries, day-care centres, pre-school education and mother-child care. If this trend continues, the loss of human capital may be extremely significant for Latin America, since an entire generation is being threatened in its physical and intellectual development by the restrictions arising from the adjustment programmes.

One final thought with regard to the problem of income distribution, the central aim of any equitable development policy, is that development plans in the majority of the Latin American countries emphasize the fact that the growth and expansion of the economy have not always been accompanied by a fair distribution of the wealth created. This regressive phenomenon has chiefly affected the rural population, the marginal urban population and a relatively substantial proportion of the middle-income strata, which are today having difficulty in satisfying their basic needs. This means that as a result of the current situation, the regressive process is tending to worsen.

/The plans

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The plans designed at the end of the 1970s incorporated several means of attacking this problem into their strategies; the majority involved traditional proposals: generation of stable and well-paid employment on the one hand, and on the other, expansion of services both in coverage and quality. In some cases, direct action was proposed involving State transfers to low-income groups through vouchers, coupons or stamps; others involved the financing of programmes directed towards beneficiary groups, with new resources arising from changes or expansions of the financial system. Others maintained the traditional subsidies to consumption and to prices of goods and public services.

As may be noted, the direct beneficiaries of many of these programmes are families, and it is obvious that in the face of the crisis and the adjustment programmes adopted, as noted above, the first budget reductions took place in those programmes and affected the compensations aimed at correcting the regressive distribution process. If we add to this the obvious deterioration in the living conditions of the so-called middle classes (salaried workers, young professionals, retirees and others), we find that there has been a worsening of social tensions, in which women, because of their role in the family, usually have to confront increasingly conflictive situations.

Assuming that the foregoing is correct, it might be wondered to what point the policies conceived and designed in the context of the guidelines of the Plan of Action are responsible for the changes which have occurred in the position of women in society. In other words, does the planner really intervene in the social process or, on the contrary, would the changes have occurred if the guidelines had not existed? The response appears to be that the changes are a product of a comprehensive effort, of the development process as a whole. The State has intervened in that process in order to stimulate growth and progress, taking care, in the 1970s, by force of ideological considerations, to resolve the problem of the sectors that are not benefitting from the growth. Thus the situation of women has indirectly benefitted from the expansion of social expenditures and the growth of the productive apparatus, although plans and policies, in their design and formulation, have not necessarily considered women as a central object of the strategy, as suggested by the guidelines. However, the individual changes which have taken place in recent years in groups and institutions are due in good measure to the awareness promoted by the Plan.

B. THE FAMILY AS OBJECT OF SOCIAL POLICIES

The Regional Plan of Action attaches special importance to the family, considering it to be "the mediating institution between individual and the social group"; for this reason it must be taken into account in defining policies aimed at improving the conditions of incorporation of women into development.

However, the implementation of this instrument cannot be evaluated without considering the influence on family life of the conditions of social environment in which family members participate in economic activities, and the psychological and socio-cultural aspects inherent in the life of each family. In other words, the family develops in a social environment whose features and vitality tend to have an influence on the way in which the family structures and develops itself.

/1. The

1. The family and the processes of change

The following are some of the processes of change noted in the region which have an influence on the family:

a) The decline in mortality, increase in life expectancy at birth and the relative stability of fertility in some sectors, are tending to cause an increase in the average number of members of the family group.

b) These trends appear to affect urban and rural families differently. The significant rural-urban migration process noted in the region in the last two decades has brought greater pressure to bear on the poor urban family, whose stability and subsistence mechanisms have clearly been affected. The rural family, on the other hand, has been deprived of its most productive agents: young people of both sexes and adult males.

c) The middle-income urban strata, on the other hand, due to their greater access to information and education, have been able to control their fertility and "have attained families with an average number of members that is similar to that of some developed countries" (ECLAC, 1979).

d) The gradual process of agrarian modernization, in addition to domestic migrations, has an influence on the populational pyramid of places of origin and destination, on levels of income and the living conditions of rural and poor urban families, on the division of labour by sex and on the exercise of authority within family units.

e) Industrialization has had a significant effect on the quality of life of the population, particularly that of those sectors which have neither the training nor the capital to incorporate themselves into the process and which make up the "poverty belts" of the majority of the region's cities.

f) Domestic work, basically the responsibility of women, has also adopted differentiated forms and conditions. In rural zones, agricultural subsistence activities and the contribution of women to agroproductive labour, are considered to be an extension of domestic work; therefore, these activities lack remuneration, recognition and labour protection as such. In urban zones, the women whose families belong to low-income sectors, i.e., poor families, face the need to join the labour market under conditions that are obviously disadvantageous: low training and pay, lack of stability, low social protection, temporary abandonment of the home with no one to take over their tasks, and double work load. The women whose families belong to middle- and high-income strata in urban zones encounter very different situations. Since they have an income which allows them to enjoy the goods and services necessary to family life, the problems they face basically relate to the traditional conceptions of women's role and to attitudes and values which are in the process of changing, which in many cases affect the stability of the family itself.

/Thus there

Thus there are two key variables in studying the situation of the family in the region: its rural-urban location and its position in the pyramid of income distribution. Despite the scarcity of data for quantitative evaluation of the situation of the family in Latin America and the Caribbean, some general features may be indicated:

i) The average size of households, in general, is higher than that of the developed countries, with marked differences between urban and rural zones and among the different income levels. There is an inverse relationship between the degree of urbanization and household size, with smaller households in the more urbanized zones. There is also an inverse relationship between the size and income of the households, since the lowest income households have a higher average number of members.

ii) The predominant type of household in the region is the nuclear household, i.e., the core group is made up of parents and their children; however, the real structure of the family appears to be closely linked to the income stratum and the rural-urban location. The nuclear household as such is predominant when the head of household is a male, particularly in urban areas and middle- and high-income strata. These households also exhibit the highest marriage rate. The structure of poor urban households varies because of the many factors noted above. They are often headed by women when the males are absent from the home, or by a close male relative (brother, father, uncle, son) of the woman of the household. Extended-family households, households headed by women and, in some cases, matriarchal households, are also common in this sector. Despite the increase in the marriage rate, de facto, or consensual unions usually predominate in these households. In urban zones, and as a result of the high migration rate, it is common to find households headed by women with children and older people under their responsibility. In these zones the marriage rate is lower than that of urban zones, and young people join the labour market earlier.

iii) Access to the social communications media is another variable that is important to modern family life. The advantages of having up-to-date information on medical and economic topics, among others, are again concentrated in urban families and, among these families, in the middle- and high-income strata.

2. The family and development programmes

Despite the diversity of factors influencing family life, the different models of family relationships and structures which are being established and the variety of programmes aimed in principle at the family, the development process in the region has not permitted the family to be considered as a social unit.

Several problems have been noted in this respect:

a) The majority of programmes and policies are aimed at specific family members: minors, women, young people and older people.

/b) When

b) When the programmes are aimed at the family group, they are usually based on a stereotyped and one-sided conception of the family, which appears to take no note of the nuances and differences noted above and aims at an ideal type of complete nuclear family.

c) Since it is assumed that the problems faced by different types of families can be attacked in a similar way, the efficiency and effectiveness of these programmes are reduced considerably.

It would appear, therefore, that a welfare-oriented approach predominates in the region, characterized by temporary actions aimed at individual members of the family group, often raised without due coherence and organization. Seldom are the proposals carried out as part of a social policy design, much less with an explicit indication of the important relationship between the family and global development strategy.

C. TYPES OF WOMEN

Based on the information presented in previous sections of this document relating to the situation of Latin American women and families, a few paragraphs should be devoted to describing the women of today, many of whose characteristics are the result of the various circumstances already discussed; during the past decade, these women have, in one form or another, been the object of public policies aimed at improving their social situation in general.

In order to facilitate this description, the following categories have been used for classification purposes: spatial location, income level, sexual stereotypes, domestic work, participation in the labour market, family size, type of union, socialization, education and access to mass media.

The information presented here has been obtained from a number of studies on Latin American and Caribbean families which have been published in recent years. The remarks made in the course of this discussion provide nothing more than an analytical paradigm for systematizing the observations which have been made with respect to the situation being studied.

For classification purposes, "spatial location" is to be understood as referring to urban-rural location; "income level" relates to earned income or revenue; "sexual stereotypes" denotes the culturally-conditioned division of roles or tasks; "domestic work" indicates the time spent satisfying the needs of the family group; "participation in the labour market" refers to employment or tasks for which monetary remuneration is received; "family size" means the average number of family members; "type of union" relates to legally-recognized marriages, consensual unions or common-law marriages; "socialization" is divided into its traditional and modern forms; "education" signifies the years of formal education received; and "access to mass media" relates to the hours of exposure to the various media.

Experience indicates that social stratification has a strong influence on the classification; the various socio-economic strata will therefore be used as a point of reference for this typology, and an attempt will be made to describe

/the behaviour

the behaviour of the various categories of women in terms of this variable. The initial division will be made on the basis of a nominal classification into low, middle and upper strata.

1. Women in the low socio-economic stratum

Women within this category can be divided into two different groups in terms of their spatial location: poor rural women and poor urban women. Each of these groups can then be subdivided further. In this case, we will consider peasant women in tropical zones, those of the Andean highlands, marginal urban women who have recently migrated to such areas, and poor women who have traditionally lived in urban areas.

a) Peasant women in tropical zones

These women are part of a family group whose way of life is based on the cultivation of a small plot of land and whose monetary earnings from the goods produced fall below the critical poverty line established by each society. Their living conditions clearly reflect the division of roles and tasks by sex. Women perform the housework and the task of reproduction; this is a full-time job involving an uninterrupted workday during which there is not a moment's rest. They participate in the labour market on an irregular basis as paid day labourers or, if they are very young, as domestic workers. Once these women marry (in most cases, the marriage is a stable one), their chances of participating in activities other than those of the home are lessened and, on average, they have more than five children. Their educational level continues to be low (one or two years of formal education, if any) and their socialization is of the traditional sort: submission to their husbands, little initiative and low risk. Depending upon the country's level of development, they have limited access to most media, but a high exposure to radio.

b) Peasant women in the Andean highlands

These women have many of the same characteristics as peasant women in tropical zones. Nonetheless, because of the cultural tradition and socio-historic context, special emphasis should be placed on the difficulties they face with respect to their integration into society as a result of language barriers which limit their access to formal education and the rigid stereotypes which relegate them to a secondary role within the family group despite the fact that they efficiently perform their role as a commercial agent in selling the various agricultural goods or crafts produced by the group. The socialization process clearly delineates the roles they are to play, they marry early (between the ages of 13 and 22), their marriages are very stable, and they have a large number of children. The educational level is low, and there is greater resistance than in other groups to educating girls. Access to information and the extent of exposure to mass media are limited to the radio.

/c) Recently-arrived

c) Recently-arrived marginal urban women

These migrant women's rural origin deeply imprints their position within the network of urban linkages between industry and services in our cities. Upon their arrival, their limited experience, knowledge and specific skills lead them to enter the informal sector of the labour market; they are employed as domestic workers with few social security benefits, if any at all, or are self-employed. Excellent studies have been conducted on this marginal economy, which is made up of vendors of food, coffee, trinkets, lottery tickets and other such articles that provide them with an income far below the established minimum; this income, when combined with other earnings, allows them to support the family group on a hand-to-mouth basis. Housing and health conditions are inadequate. Once a (fairly unstable) consensual union has been formed, families with over five children are not uncommon due to the couple's relative lack of education and information. In most cases, the woman is the head of the household. The women in this position experience an extremely sharp contrast between their socialization and their stereotypical role within the social setting from which they have come, on the one hand, and their daily life in a highly competitive society involving a totally different lifestyle, on the other. In some instances, the adaptation process may take more than a generation.

d) Poor women from an urban background

These women are second- or third-generation urban dwellers whose vertical social mobility has been obstructed by various factors, one of which is the slow growth of overall wealth. Their living conditions are usually better and they generally live in stable neighbourhoods where most services are available. The most important factor is perhaps that, although they are more highly educated and better informed, they continue to have few skills; this hinders their access to stable and better-paid jobs and, as a result, they work in the manufacturing industry (especially textiles and the clothing business), in the services sector and in trade. They are more often legally married and their marriages are more stable than in the preceding case, they have been subject to an urban type of socialization and, like the women in the preceding group, they are strongly influenced by mass media, in this case television and mass-distribution printed media. These women are much better informed and are capable of launching movements to demand the rights of their community. In democratic societies, they participate openly in the election process. Their relationships with their husbands or partners involve much greater equality than those of the above groups.

The women discussed here have been the object of attention of various public policies in recent years: basic health care, increased school enrolment, technical assistance and, in some cases, even integral development programmes, such as those directed at agrarian reform or urban development. As a result, their social context has undergone sweeping changes within the social structure.

The results obtained with respect to the status of women have therefore varied from one society to another. In some, women are perhaps more educated; in others, they may have greater access to mass media; in still others, they may have greater mobility. Nonetheless, many of the factors discussed above continue

/to be

to be obstacles which must be eliminated. All these women also experience relatively great hardships with respect to their living standards and quality of life, the very limited amount of free time at their disposal, and their socio-cultural poverty. Their level of participation continues to be low, with the exception of those living in societies that are undergoing processes of rapid social change, where collective mobilization efforts are fast producing improvements with respect to some of the variables discussed. Special mention should be made of the complications which arise in urban settings as a result of the diversity of women's roles. Such difficulties are encountered in all social strata, although their complexity may vary, and they are one area of social policy which has still not been satisfactorily resolved.

2. Women in the middle socio-economic stratum

This category includes the various types of women who make up what is called the middle class in Latin America; three categories of women will be described here: small- or medium-scale rural producers, urban wage-earners and young women professionals.

a) Small- and medium-scale rural producers

As in the preceding case in so far as physical location is concerned, there are women living in rural zones who are the wives or daughters of highly productive medium- and small-scale landowners whose position as such provides them with a sufficient income for them to be considered as members of the rural middle class. This group's level of education, access to information and exposure to mass media are substantially greater than those of the peasant women described previously. However, the influence of tradition on their socialization and the stereotypes regarding their roles and tasks may pose a considerable obstacle to their participation in the administration and management of farms or estates, in external business relations and in the performance of certain tasks which the men in the family consider to be a male prerogative. The most serious conflicts between generations --between fathers and their daughters-- arise in this regard. In terms of the various socio-historic contexts involved, there was a certain degree of reticence until recently about providing girls with the education which is so closely linked to vertical social mobility, and preference was given to boys. The families in this group are stable, legally-constituted and made up of three or four members.

b) Urban wage-earners

In order for them to have been able to compete and integrate themselves into their surroundings, these women are necessarily better educated, more highly qualified and have specific skills. This makes it possible for them to participate in the formal labour market as skilled workers, office staff or employees in services and business. This provides them with a stable income, which gives them independence, causes them to delay marriage, allows them to study and obtain training and, as the head of a household, permits them to assume their responsibilities with greater confidence. Their higher income makes it possible for them to find adequate housing and to acquire home appliances which make housework easier; it also poses the question of what they are to do with their free time.

/In their

In their marriages, especially those of the younger generations, tasks and responsibilities are shared, decisions are no longer taken only by the husband, and the economic burden of supporting the household is also shared, which gives rise to new rights and duties. This points to changes in both stereotypes and socialization. The nuclear family with two or three children becomes subject to the pressures of a consumer society, which may lead to problems and to the dissolution of the marriage. The problems arising from stagnation, inflation and from the loss of a feeling that progress is being made stand out much more clearly in this socio-economic class because, since its members are more highly educated, better informed and have greater exposure to the various media, their expectations and needs are many and varied, and they look for solutions on the short or medium term. Their frustration may therefore become a source of potential conflict, in which women's organizational abilities and capacity for mobilization may play a role in fostering change. Another problem for women in this stratum can be job and wage discrimination, in addition to the difficulties associated with taking care of young children when the family does not have the support of other family members, such as grandmothers or aunts, to help watch them. This often makes it necessary for women to withdraw from the labour force temporarily until the children start to go to school.

c) Young professional women

The women in this category are perhaps the clearest evidence of the changes which have taken place in our societies over the past 20 years. They are independent young women, freed from the guardianship of their families, are responsible for their own sexual and emotional lives in a way which, up until now, was unknown in this context, and are a permanent source of conflict between the generations. This group breaks with the traditional schemes of socialization, division of labour and stereotypes more than the other groups. The fact that they hold a university degree or its equivalent allows them --so long as there is economic growth-- to obtain better-paid jobs, which opens up new possibilities in so far as their relationship with their husband or partner is concerned. Marriage is not regarded as a prerequisite for happiness and emotional stability; indeed, single mothers are socially accepted. The greater knowledge and information at their disposal allows them to organize their time better, to have leisure time and to take an active role in various groups and associations. Despite their liberation, however, they are still subject to job or wage discrimination.

The above categories do not exhaust the possible combinations of the variables chosen for this analysis. They do, however, point up a number of elements which all women in the urban middle class have in common. The first such element is that their incorporation into the labour market depends on a combination of factors: economic growth, skills and changes in society's attitudes so that they may be accepted without discrimination. The second element is that their aspirations and expectations --which are the result of their greater exposure to the mass media, education and information-- are often manipulated by publicity, advertising and "fashion". The third element they have in common is that the family, as such, is constantly subject to tension, whether due to differences between a husband's and wife's level of education and income, to the new roles that women wish to play which run counter to their traditional endeavours, or due to the system's inability to respond promptly to their many expectations. Finally, the education and care of children and the aged become a source of varying degrees of worry, guilt and conflict within contemporary urban society.

/3. Women

3. Women in the upper socio-economic stratum

No clear distinction will be drawn between urban and rural areas with respect to this category, because the women at this socio-economic level have traits which involve both differences and similarities. In most cases, for example, large-scale rural landowners and their families live in urban centres at least part of the time, if not all of it. A different kind of lifestyle is therefore not involved, as it was in the cases discussed previously. Moreover, the members of this class are not the object of focused or specific public policies.

The women belonging to the upper socio-economic category, either because they have a source of unearned income or because they are highly paid for their professional services or activities in business or industry, are a much less numerous group than the preceding ones due to the region's regressive income distribution. Their concerns are not of a material nature.

Significant changes have been observed among housewives who have decided to return to university life as adults. In most cases, these women had abandoned their studies 10 or 15 years ago when, according to their socialization, family tradition and class, all that was expected of them was for them to be housewives. Upon having passed through this stage, they decide to return to school in order to complete their professional training in response to pressure from those around them. The results are surprising: an extremely good academic performance, as well as active participation and concern with the changes taking place in society, which in some cases leads them to adopt radical positions in opposition to their class; this, in turn, may even lead them to end their marriages.

At other times, these changes cause women to become interested in professional endeavours and to become involved in public activities as members of deliberative bodies which play an active role in defending "just" causes (environmental protection, community services, volunteer work, participation in welfare or cultural institutions and organizations, etc.).

The changes discussed here have revolutionized behaviour patterns, the relationships of couples and the education of their children, basically as a result of the increased education and individual progress of the type of woman described in this section; these changes contribute to the building of a more egalitarian and democratic society.

Conclusion

The groups of women that have been described here are not idealized types; categories have been combined in order to account for the presence of numerous policy subjects and objects. Therefore, the Plan of Action's appeal to the region to do something about the situation of women cannot ignore the complexity of this entire area. Hence the extreme difficulty of its evaluation, inasmuch as the material that has been examined does not really reveal to what extent the guidelines take into account the various aspects of the subject of women in Latin American and the Caribbean.

/D. CHANGES

D. CHANGES IN LEGISLATION

At the outset of the Decade, legal principles were one of the areas providing the clearest evidence of the existence of complex forms of discrimination against women.

The Plan of Action reflected the belief that an effort had to be made to eliminate these inequalities. It was recognized that, although legislation alone cannot achieve equality, it does at least provide an important indication of the relationships which should exist within society and of standards to be used for eliminating de facto discrimination.

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, which was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 18 December 1979 and entered into effect on 3 September 1981, establishes compulsory legal norms for those States acceding to it and provides guiding principles aimed at fostering a heightened awareness of the problem on the part of those governments which were not party to the Convention.

The constitutions of all the countries in the region set forth principles of equality as an indispensable component of an ideal society. In the real world, however, it has been demonstrated that the formation of egalitarian relations is a long and difficult process which has yet to be entirely completed.

In order to assess the actual legislative situation in the region, the status of Latin American and Caribbean women has been analysed in relation to the exercise of political, civil, labour and penal rights with a view to appraising the impact which the recommendations made for the Decade have had on such norms.

1. Political rights

Political rights are recognized in the region without discrimination between men and women, despite the fact that some constitutions may not contain any express statement which openly refers to this matter. In such cases, the universally accepted principle that "where the law makes no distinction, neither should those interpreting it" is applicable.

a) As a result of an ongoing effort, the right to vote had already become a reality by the 1970s. It is nonetheless important to point out that this victory was won only through a succession of such efforts, beginning over 50 years ago when the first country to give women the vote did so in 1929.

In the Caribbean countries, the right to vote was won before independence; in those territories which are not independent, the right to vote is exercised without discrimination between the sexes.

By way of example, some figures indicating the percentage of women casting votes in the region can be reviewed, based on information compiled by the corresponding electoral bodies. The number of women on the voting rolls is far from being proportional to their participation:

/Bolivia (urban

Bolivia (urban population)	(1980)	80%
Chile	(1970)	65%-70%
Ecuador	(1979)	70%
Guatemala		30.7%
Honduras		41%
Panama	(1983)	85%
Venezuela	(1978)	92.7%

The right to vote has certainly been an important victory, but it does not represent the true exercise of political rights nor active participation in the decision-making process.

It has been hypothesized that the democratic processes of voter mobilization contribute to the incorporation of women; that permeability, however, also depends on educational and cultural factors which play a role in the awakening of expectations as well as in the acceptance of their participation.

b) Citizenship

Native citizenship is an acknowledged right for both men and women on an equal basis if they were born within the country's territory or if their mother or father were citizens. Legal citizenship entails an obligation to fulfil the requirements of the pertinent constitution. The institution of marriage gives rise to differences. The right to extend their citizenship to their foreign spouses is conferred equally upon both women and men by the constitutions of five countries. Four constitutions make no mention of this and another six recognize this right only for men. This method of acquiring citizenship is not provided for in the legislation of another four countries.

Recent mass phenomena of illegal migration, confrontation and social instability create difficult situations and pose problems with respect to nationality and citizenship; under these circumstances, women and children are the most affected and least protected. Such situations make it necessary to attempt to establish a closer relationship between principles of equality and complex social conditions if equity is really to serve as a path towards development and peace.

2. Civil rights

Family law is a key element in relation to women, since the institution of marriage often affects the legal standing of married women, both individually and in their relations with their children, as well as in connection with the administration of assets, etc.

Articles 15 and 16 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women recognizes women's equality with men before the law and vouchsafes them an equal opportunity for exercising that right, with special reference to marriage and family relations.

/The family

The family reflects economic changes, social developments and technological innovations; the statutes relating to this dynamic societal unit must therefore be adapted to the actual situation to which they pertain. Within the legislation, new legal instruments have been introduced both for legally-constituted and de facto marriages, such as common law marriages, which are known as consensual unions or free unions.

These provisions include giving children born to parents who are not united in marriage the same rights as enjoyed by those born in wedlock; the freedom to recognize children born of extra-marital unions as a basic principle of justice; and the primary importance for a person's development of being able to identify his or her progenitors. The Convention set forth a series of guiding principles and specific criteria relating to the elimination of discrimination based solely on marital status.

The influence of Roman law and the Napoleonic Code made itself felt in the Latin American region until well into the twentieth century. Interestingly enough, most of the constitutions provide for equal rights and the elimination of all types of discrimination based on sex, race or religion. Legislation has not necessarily developed in tandem with these principles, however, and conflicting situations continue to exist in this area.

Anglo-Saxon principles also have an influence in the region, especially in the Caribbean, where customary law embodies Western society's vision of an ideal family and where the revolution in social rights has progressively led to the incorporation of principles of equality in relation to the status of wives and the authority of husbands, even though discrimination among ethnic or religious groups persists.

Despite the progress that has been made during the Decade, instances of discrimination and contradictions remain; these problems will be discussed below.

a) Marital authority over women

For cultural reasons, in customary law the women has the right to add her husband's surname after her own; she should not be sanctioned for not doing so, however. This is a right but not an obligation, and it ceases to exist upon dissolution of the marriage. The laws of nine countries do not make it compulsory for women to use their husbands' surname, but in another eight countries women continue to be obliged to do so. It is important to point out, however, that women usually continue to use their maiden name as a means of maintaining continuity in this respect in their professional, work and academic endeavours.

Marital authority is maintained in the legislation of five countries in the sense that the authorization of the husband is required in order for a woman to incur civil obligations, whereas another six countries have amended their legislation to give men and women equal civil powers.

/b) Domicile

b) Domicile

The legislation of most of the Spanish-American countries recognizes the right of both parties to establish the couple's domicile by mutual consent; in the case of a conflict, however, they usually either give preference to the husband's choice or do not make any clear provision in that regard. Making this choice by mutual agreement is provided for in the legislation of seven countries in the region.

c) Parental responsibility

Women's rights with respect to the person and goods of their children are one of the most controversial areas relating to discrimination, or at least one of the areas which gives rise to the greatest conflict. The concept of patria potestas has its origin in Roman law, and its meaning is very specific; it is the power ("of the head of a family") which is conferred upon the pater familias, and which entails more rights than obligations. The granting of greater rights to minors and the active role of women have led to changes in what was once an unquestionable right; it has now been converted into the authority which is shared by the father and mother. The influence of social change on legal norms has resulted in the incorporation of this provision into the legislation of seven countries.

In another seven countries, the patria potestas is exercised exclusively by the father, and the mother may exercise that power only in the absence of the father or for compelling reasons.

The major problem arises in the case of children born out of wedlock in relation to the ability of married women and men to recognize children born prior to the marriage or who were born during the marriage, once it has been dissolved. Another variation of this problem is the difference between children born of an adulterous relationship and natural children, and their recognition. Neither voluntary recognition nor an investigation into the child's maternity is usually allowed when it is a case of attributing a child to a married woman. This is a decisive concept because of the fact that our laws are derived from Roman law, which provided that: "mater semper certa est, pateris est quem nuptiae demonstrant", i.e., maternity is a certainty, whereas paternity must be demonstrated on the basis of a union with the mother.

The traditional form of classifying children has now been eliminated in nearly all the countries of the region; a very important factor in this change has been the growing awareness of the unjust situation in which such classifications placed children. Nonetheless, some forms of discrimination remain, one example being provisions which allow a married father, but not a married mother, to recognize a child born out of wedlock. A maternity inquiry in the case of a married woman is tacitly prohibited in four countries. Adultery is regarded as a crime in most penal codes, and the child constitutes irrefutable proof of that offense. Their recognition therefore must counter to the right of children to know and to be recognized by their fathers.

/Thus, in

Thus, in those countries where the father retains patria potestas, the mother often prefers that the father withhold recognition so that she will not lose the child, i.e., she chooses to remain the child's sole guide and guardian. This is quite common in situations where the mother is the only progenitor on a steady basis and where there are a number of temporary fathers.

As previously noted, this is one of the most controversial areas with respect to the issue of equal rights; although the general principle is that responsibility for the children should be shared, the contradictions are obvious.

Some of the provisions in this respect are merely unfortunate leftovers from traditional attitudes, but they clearly illustrate the difficulties involved in women's assumption of their civil rights.

d) Contesting paternity or maternity

In five countries, the paternity of a child can only be challenged by the man. Scientific progress in this field has given rise to significant changes. For example, one country's civil code states that the husband cannot disavow a child by claiming impotency, unless it is manifest and permanent. Failing to recognize the child is not allowed, even in this case, when conception has taken place by means of the artificial insemination of the woman with her husband's authorization. Nor can the husband disclaim the child by contending and proving that the woman has committed adultery, unless it has occurred during the period of conception and he can also prove other facts and circumstances which together provide credible evidence that excludes his paternity.

The subject of artificial insemination is dealt with in the legislation of three countries; these laws embody the principle that the woman is the centre of protection and prevention in all matters relating to maternity. Although it is not possible to anticipate the future, it is possible to keep pace with it. The first successful experiment with test tube babies was conducted in 1978 and, as of 1982, only 3% of such attempts had been successful.

e) Guardianship

Most countries recognize the ability of men and women to act as guardians on an equal basis. Some differences do exist, however, which warrant discussion. In one country, male children become the guardians of their father or mother in the absence of the spouse, but this is not the case for female children.

In another country, a single woman can refuse to act as guardian solely on the basis of her sex, and a married woman must have her husband's authorization in order to act as a guardian; such authorization is not necessary, however, in the case of children which the two have had together.

Another body of legislation sets exemplary behaviour as one of the conditions for acting as a guardian. As a result, a woman who has been divorced on the grounds of adultery is not allowed to serve in this capacity. In yet another country, a woman cannot agree to serve as a guardian without the consent of her husband.

/If rights

If rights are to be made equal, then married men and adult children would also have to be required to obtain authorization, and this requirement would have to be eliminated in the event of another marriage. In this regard, the new laws not only include these approaches, but also establish this right on an equal basis even for paternal and maternal grandparents. Moreover, because of the fact that the coming of legal age has gradually been set at 18 in nearly all cases, new facets of many of these problems have come to the fore which heighten the urgency of establishing equal rights.

f) Common law marriages

Common law marriages (customarily referred to as "concubinato") are a very frequent occurrence in the region. This situation has been recognized in the laws of our countries and they have been accorded a legal status. Illiteracy, the isolation of rural areas, and the scarcity of economic resources are some of the factors which have increased or at least maintained the frequency of such situations. Rejecting or ignoring them does harm, in particular, to children and women who lack legal or material protection.

The constitutions of five countries confer equal status to common law and legal marriages based on their duration, widespread recognition and offspring. Two countries established this principle in the recent reforms of their respective civil codes, inasmuch as they referred to the protection of the family in a broad sense.

g) Dissolution of the marriage

A marriage may be dissolved by separation, divorce or death. Divorce a vinculo matrimonii, which leaves the spouse free to remarry, exists in all but three Latin American and Caribbean countries; in one other nation, where marriage in the Catholic Church has legal effect, only those who have contracted civil marriage may obtain a divorce a vinculo matrimonii. The Catholic Church may annul a marriage in very specific cases, without reference to civil law.

One striking fact is that all the bodies of legislation retain clauses defining circumstances which are deemed to make it impossible for a husband and wife to continue to live together. Mutual consent has not been readily accepted as grounds for dissolving the bond of marriage; however, a separation of three years or more is beginning to be regarded as substantial grounds for resolving an irregular situation.

Discriminatory aspects are more often found in the application of the laws than in their wording. For example, adultery on the part of the woman is grounds for separation or divorce in four countries but, in the case of the man, this is only so if he openly keeps a mistress and creates a scandal. Many of these provisions are difficult to apply because of traditional permissive attitudes towards men in most of our societies. One significant example of the impact of the Decade was the repeal, in 1978, of an article which provided that the woman forfeited her share of community property if it were proven that she had committed adultery; the grounds of adultery were defined in the same way for both spouses. A certain amount of discrimination against the woman was retained, in that she would receive alimony only if she was not responsible for the divorce.

/With respect

With respect to divorce, women are most directly affected by the problems arising in relation to any children who are under age and community property. In so far as under-age children are concerned, the guardianship of children under 7 years of age is usually awarded to the mother. The problem arises in relation to patria potestas, as has already been discussed. The sharing of patria potestas on an equal basis has had a very healthy effect, in that it removes the issue of the children and their welfare from the context of the divorce and separates the role of the father and mother from the problems which exist between the husband and wife.

Serious difficulties are connected with conducting a comparative analysis of the régimes relating to community property due to the lack of legal information and scarcity of studies concerning legal doctrine. Community property régimes are made up of the body of regulations governing the spouses' property interests both vis-à-vis each other and in relation to third parties.

In those legal systems which have adopted a fairer régime, the concept of a "deferred community" is used. This functions as a régime under which property is kept separate but is disposed of upon settlement as community property. Property is administered and disposed of separately, although some bodies of legislation require mutual consent for dispositive acts. Upon settlement, the community property is split between the spouses or their heirs. One country has used this system since 1888. In 1968, another nation established a system under which each has a share in community property, but the husband administers those goods whose origin cannot be easily determined. Other countries set up similar systems over the period between 1946 and 1982.

The significance of this principle lies in the possession of equal authority to exercise this right and an equal interest in the assets accruing from the dissolution of the marriage.

Upon dissolution, the idea of mutual assistance and understanding is set forth as the ideal way of dealing with the frustrations of a divorce. One country provides for assistance between the former spouses according to their ability. In four other countries, the guilty spouse is responsible for supporting the innocent one. In another country, the spouse who is unable to support him or herself is entitled to one-fifth of the other's property, provided that the former was not responsible for the divorce, unless he or she is suffering from a serious illness.

In another country, women who are declared to be innocent are entitled to alimony so long as they live "honourably" and do not remarry. Women who are found to be the guilty party must support their husbands if the latter are indigent (the law does not define what is meant by an "honourable" life). In this case, the concept of "honourability" refers to fidelity, i.e., lifetime fidelity to their former husbands, in view of the fact that the marriage has been dissolved and, in most cases, against their will.

In another three countries, no distinctions are drawn according to sex; the respective laws confine themselves to noting the need for mutual aid when means of support are lacking. It should be pointed out that it is not discriminatory

/but only

but only fair for such obligations to cease upon remarriage; this is not the case, however, with respect to the provisions referring to proof that the woman is leading an honourable life, since cultural variables usually bring objective judgements concerning social conduct into play.

One of the major problems involved in the dissolution of a marriage relates to the protection and support of the children. The laws of most of our countries provide for support payments for children who are under age. This obligation is often not complied with voluntarily, however. Resorting to the courts for its enforcement creates conflicts for women, since their former husbands often use the child support payments to bargain for the affection of the children and to interfere in the organization of family life. Often, women consider the possibility of being the sole breadwinner for the family so that they can avoid any contact with their former husbands. In both cases, the resulting insecurity and ambiguity have an adverse effect on the women and their children.

3. Labour laws

The 1979 Convention refers extensively to overcoming any sort of discrimination against women in relation to their inalienable right to work. It stresses the need to foster the conditions which will make working a dignified way of life, including the right to social security.

Special attention is accorded to maternity since it is an issue which is directly related to women and one which has a bearing on society.

Although, at the outset, women worked primarily in agricultural or domestic activities, they began to enter into the field of industrial labour --along with children under 7 years of age-- in the nineteenth century.

In the twentieth century, as women have had access to jobs in the services sector as well as in industry, the share of the labour force represented by women workers has increased, especially in the more developed countries; it is estimated that the female labour force will amount to 35% of the total by the year 2000. However, the categorization of male and female labour had an impact on the corresponding legislation, which drew distinctions regarding promotion and training, as well as creating cultural barriers based on the view that domestic life and employment are incompatible.

All the bodies of law have now recognized the rights of women who work outside the home as being the same as those of all workers.

a) Employment contracts

Labour laws have progressively been regulated by general laws, including provisions relating to public order, i.e., they are not subjet to the will of the parties and cannot be renounced either unilaterally or bilaterally. Once a woman has reached legal age, she has full legal powers to enter into

/an employment

an employment contract; minors may do so through their legal representatives. The husband's authorization is required in some countries in order for a woman to exercise her right to work. This requirement was repealed in 1981 in one country, and it was established at that time that all women, whatever their marital status, may exercise that right.

With respect to environmental conditions, the corresponding legislation tends to exclude women from work involving physical effort and unhealthy conditions. One example in this respect is the "chair law", which was promulgated in one country in 1918; it made it mandatory to have a given number of chairs so that female employees could rest whenever their duties allowed them to do so. This law was later extended to include men.

Night work for women was banned in some labour codes in 1949. This provision has been regarded as anachronistic and discriminatory by many women, in as much as it limits their job opportunities and chances of promotion.

Most bodies of legislation retain provisions relating to the protection of women in the course of night work. This restriction results in labour discrimination, since women are then excluded from the additional compensation paid for this type of work and from opportunities to move up on the job scale.

In relation to economic considerations, women's rights to equal opportunity and equal pay are set forth in such international agreements as the Preamble to the United Nations Charter, the ILO Convention concerning Discrimination in respect of Employment and Occupation (1958), the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

A survey which was conducted by the ILO in 1977 shows that women are paid between 50% and 80% of what men receive for the same work in the developed countries.

Discrimination is related to delays in professional promotion and women's lack of familiarity with the laws designed to assist them. Moreover, women's wages continue to be regarded as a contribution to the family budget rather than as a specific amount which is owed for the work done. This situation also prevails with respect to the observance of work schedules, vacations, benefits and dismissal.

b) Protection with respect to motherhood

In most countries of the region, the law protects pregnant women by prohibiting their dismissal and providing for a paid rest period before and after the birth.

Despite the progress and efforts made by the Latin American countries in this respect, it should be noted that such protection is only accorded to women in formally organized jobs.

/This protection

This protection includes a period of time for nursing the child and the establishment of day care centres near the place of employment so that it is possible to care for the child as well as to sustain the necessary mother-child emotional relationship.

All women entitled to the benefits provided by social security institutions have the right to free medical care during pregnancy, the birth itself and during the time when they are nursing the child. There are many such women in all the countries because, in addition to women workers, the wives of workers and employees are also insured.

Dismissals of women because they become pregnant continue to occur in the region, according to the offices in charge of matters relating to women and children in the various ministries of labour. It is difficult to demonstrate this with statistics, however, because such figures do not provide a picture of the real situation and because employers often use unjustified grounds for dismissal or psychological threats in order to accomplish the same thing. Moreover, because women do not know their rights, they do not report such occurrences at the proper time, with the result that they cannot avail themselves of the legal protection to which they are entitled.

In addition to being an acquired right, the protection of motherhood is in the interests of all, in as much as it represents all of society's responsibility for human life.

Maternity should not be considered as an "illness"; hence the fact that laws are only a part of the protection to be provided in this regard; contrary to what is sometimes thought, regulations alone can never deal with all aspects of this situation.

In actual fact, there is some reticence to hiring women workers and professionals of childbearing age, even if arguments relating to maternity are not used; instead, other fortuitous circumstances, such as the absence of vacancies or other characteristics of the job, are used as justifications.

In most of the countries, there are pressure groups --usually of women-- which are demanding that the amount of paid time off after childbirth should be extended. An overall view of the full picture must be taken with respect to this complicated problem; on the one hand, it would benefit the emotional relationship between a mother and her child, but on the other hand, it might mean that women would be excluded from the labour market so that the added expense and attendant problems could be avoided. This situation might more properly be dealt with by social security than by legislation and, in all events, it is influenced by the different employment conditions prevailing in the various countries.

With respect to services to be provided for mothers and their infants, the legislation of a number of countries requires companies to provide day care centres and nurseries if they have a minimum of between 30 and 50 women employees. This has contributed to the development of such services, albeit at a slow pace; on the other hand, however, this legal requirement can be evaded simply by employing fewer women. Moreover, as a result of urban mobility, women often do not exert ongoing pressure in this respect because they prefer a place of employment near their homes.

/The need

The need to demand such services has made itself felt, and most clauses relating to benefits in collective contracts recognize that need; it also figures in specific ILO agreements.

Because of the nature of social dynamics, this is not only a necessity for working women, but for the families of workers, since the family is the unit responsible for bringing up children. Such services should therefore be seen as improving the situation for the families of workers rather than solely as a benefit for women workers. This global focus has played a part in the creation of special funds for children under six years of age in some countries.

The application of laws to protect motherhood demonstrates the region's respect for women and families, in that these requirements are perhaps better enforced than any others --probably because of their specificity and clarity. Nonetheless, such protection is still lacking in some nations for women agricultural and domestic workers, who often perform hard labour throughout their pregnancy and recommence such work only a few days after childbirth. It is difficult to enforce the law in these sectors, because women often do piecework, are unaware of the protection with respect to motherhood to which they are entitled by law, and lack the economic resources to seek legal assistance.

c) "Juris tantum" situation

A large group of women workers lacks protection: women who work in their homes and women domestic workers.

i) Women who work in their homes. Work in the home is carried out by those women who are housewives and bound to their homes and who therefore carry out the work at home. For some companies this is advantageous from an economic point of view since the worker is simply supplied with raw materials, and she herself must meet machinery, maintenance, rest periods and paid vacations, sick leave and medical assistance.

This type of work, which is also known as the "putting out system" or "domestic outwork", tends to disguise the legally existing contractual work relationship by making the worker appear to be independent, a small businesswoman working on her own, but if this situation is thoroughly analysed, it is seen that work dependence, and therefore a contract, does exist, and even when there is no specific document, there is a tacit disciplinary and legal obligation and an even greater obligation to provide social security. This is also the situation of women in the rural sector who do piecework.

ii) Domestic workers, whose services go into caring for another's household, have a long history in Latin America and the Caribbean and are highly significant as to numbers but receive disadvantageous treatment. They have been neglected in labour legislation and only occasionally have some very restricted guarantees.

The problem of family life also has an influence on the relationship created involved in the contract and the grounds for dissolving it. In particular, it is very difficult to delimit "improper conduct", as grounds for dismissal

/without compensation.

without compensation. However, substantial progress has been made with the growing requirement to provide social benefits and vacation time. This work sector is made up mostly of workers with little training and heavy family responsibilities. Furthermore, since this work is carried out in the "home", there are compensations in kind that are difficult to quantify and cannot be spoken of in general terms, although the situation could be greatly improved if emphasis were placed on giving greater professional status to "domestic service" and providing the women with social security and retirement benefits, since from any legal point of view whatsoever, there is a work contract relationship.

d) Organization of women workers

The ILO Regional Conference held in Medellín in 1979, raised the problem of low participation of women in trade unions as one of the aspects influencing their limited integration into economic life.

Legislation in the area of trade-union associations includes all workers equally, and makes no differences between members on the basis of sex. Participation in trade unions is difficult for women, since this is an activity which they must add to their domestic work on the one hand, and on the other, they encounter difficulties in obtaining leadership posts. During the Decade, promotional efforts have been carried out by the ILO and other bodies.

e) Economic value of domestic work

The tasks performed by the housewife are broad and complex and would be legally protected if they were carried out by third parties. Labour legislation has little to say on the subject. However, civil legislation recognizes domestic work as a family asset. Some developed countries have raised the need to extend social security to housewives through family compensations or supplementary allocations. Obviously this situation differs according to social stratum, but no one can deny the fact that women's work in the home is a social resource.

One aspect which has not yet been considered in the region is the right of the working family to recreation. There are institutions which promote recreational activities, but they are limited and not stipulated by law.

Many of the social clauses in collective contracts raise the need for the promotion and recycling of workers. In the case of women, this aspect is crucial, since they usually leave the job market when they are pregnant and caring for minor children and re-enter it at a disadvantage as regards to training. There are many training centres in the region, but these do not reflect a true trade-union policy of incentive to the betterment of women in this area.

4. Penal law

The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women, in article 2, paragraph G, binds the countries to repeal all national penal provisions which constitute discrimination against women.

/Laws on

Laws on violence are usually applied indiscriminately to men and women. The specific differences arise in the conception of women as victims, especially in aspects relating to "rape, kidnapping, infidelity and abortion".

In situations of physical mistreatment, which occur frequently within families, defense of honour and emotional states are usually considered to be attenuating factors in the response to offenses against prestige and honour. Social practice is weak regarding the persons responsible, since the problem lies in the fact that no charges are brought by the "dishonoured" woman, who has the weight of public opinion against her.

With regard to rape, it has generally been said that only women can be victims, but the reality is that men too can be the subjects of sexual violence. Some penal codes assume the term of carnal "violence" to be differentiated, and it is therefore applied equitably to both sexes.

Adultery and murder as a response of adultery still have powerful attenuating factors that are favourable to men. Thus a man who kills his spouse because of infidelity may hope to be released without substantial problems, but the opposite is not true. This is supported by the tradition that infidelity in men is natural, or at least socially understandable.

Another aspect that is interesting because of the cultural connotation still connected with it is prostitution. The majority of bodies of legislation prohibit and punish prostitution and lay down definite rules with regard to the women who practice it, but none with respect to the client or the person who incites to prostitution. Few bodies of regulations suggest forms of rehabilitation, and perhaps the aspect most emphasized is the inspection which should be undergone by those practicing prostitution.

Legislation is extremely general as regards procuring or the corruption of minors, and here again, there is no mention of policies or actions designed to rehabilitate and prevent these types of behaviour.

In the case of infanticide, explicit reference is made to women, but at no time is infanticide connected with the father, who might indirectly be causing these acts.

Some legislations provide for reductions of sentence when aspects relating to "honour" are involved.

Bodies of legislation stipulate that induced abortion is a criminal act and therefore punishable. Therapeutic abortion is only accepted in order to save the mother's life, and eugenic abortion when the pregnancy is a result of rape. In none of these legislations is abortion dealt with as a method of birth control. Without doubt this has been one of the most controversial areas during the Decade. Because of ethical social and religious questions, in addition to the small amount of systematic research, remarks concerning this problem tend to be to one extreme or the other. It should be noted that single women of low educational and economic levels are the most affected.

/Abandonment of

Abandonment of a pregnant woman is a situation that is not provided for in any legislation and is generally a powerful contributing cause in the processes mentioned above.

Our legislations classify abortion as a crime, with sentences varying from one to four years.

Some codes lay down explicit rules for situations involving abuse of de facto superiority and make reference aggravated rape or rape involving abuse of authority, especially against persons who are under one's custody.

a) Conditions of sentences imposed on women

Few legislations in the region take account of the need to consider the special situation of women as regards pregnancy and motherhood. Most of the countries maintain specific institutions for women, but attendance to their situation as mothers leaves a lot to be desired. Some bodies of legislation provide for the lodging of small children near the prison or even with their mothers up to the age of four. Furthermore, women are usually doubly affected since their own families reject them because of social pressure, and the children themselves may even do so. Rarely do we see a man move near a prison where his spouse or girlfriend is being held in order to give her continuous support, which usually does happen with women. Social rehabilitation continues to be one of the problems that is not approached in all its complexity.

b) By way of evaluation

There is no doubt that the legal situation and the real situation are two different aspects. In general progress in the legislations of the region has been directed towards seeking equitable relations between men and women. However, reality has shown that the laws are insufficient and serve only as an "ideal model".

Some of the points agreed on at the end of the Decade are the following:

i) No one may deprive a woman of her right to vote, and in countries where that right is obligatory, an attempt to prevent her from exercising it may be subject to penalties.

ii) Majority is attained at the same age for both sexes and involves the same rights and responsibilities.

iii) No one may attempt to prevent a woman from exercising her profession or occupation.

iv) Legislative changes are being aimed more and more frequently at equalizing responsibilities with regard to parental authority over children, administration of the family's assets, and the establishment of the domicile or household.

v) Patriarchal authority is being replaced by "parental" authority.

/vi) Equality

vi) Equality of labour rights has been established throughout the region; however, its applicability depends on an educational and informational process at all levels, both for employers and employees.

vii) Protection of motherhood is guaranteed by legislation throughout the region; however, the concept of maternity as illness is being maintained and makes it difficult to implement existing regulations and contractual clauses.

viii) The situation of urban women appears to be better in these aspects than that of rural women, for whom large-scale efforts should be made to develop egalitarian activities both at the family structure and institutional levels.

One fact which merits some thought is the fact that the laws have been an important instrument of change, or at least reflect the existence of a certain level of awareness and sensitivity to the problem, but that if women do not assume responsibility for applying those laws, they will remain inoperative, at least for the majority.

E. PRELIMINARY CONCLUSIONS

In an ECLAC publication,4/ a number of overall guidelines concerning public policies are shown, which should be adopted by governments in order to raise the status of women. In support of these guidelines, and on the basis of an analytical examination of this document, a summary of the main conclusions is given below:

1. Progress, in respect of the behaviour of the social indicators, was made up to the mid-1970s. From that time on, the situation has tended to stagnate and in some cases, such as that of the incorporation of women into paid labour, there has been an obvious decline.

2. With regard to education, health and other welfare programmes, the goals established for the Decade have been partially achieved in that there has been significant progress in the participation of children and young people in middle and higher education and also in the parasystem and in distance education courses. With regard to health, an important effort has been made in the extension of coverage, rural sanitation and improvements in mother-child nutrition. In some countries, the institutional network provided in support of mothers and children, such as child-care centres, nurseries, care for children of pre-school age and family orientation, has been strengthened.

3. Urban development, rural-urban migration, industrialization and the incorporation of women into the labour force have affected family composition, structure and integration. Thus, on the basis of the occurrence of these factors, different types of family may be identified in a society.

4. In addition, the rise in the level of information, education and urban development of the societies considered is reflected in considerable drops in fertility. This means social change and transformation in the family structure which are still not reflected in official statistics.

/5. With

5. With regard to income redistribution policies, although the emphasis has been traditional in the majority of cases, the existence of some innovative experiments with income distribution should be noted, the results of which point in two directions: first, to the expansion of family consumption and second, to the betterment of human resources, as a matter of social policy.

6. With regard to the Plan of Action, in the revised documents it may be noted that in nearly all the countries, the lines suggested have been followed. However, the experience acquired at national level seems to have been in educational or health programmes, and does not seem to have been so widespread in those programmes which are specifically directed to women, the action taken having been on an experimental level in the majority of cases.

7. One of the recommendations in the Plan of Action --that which refers to the need for information-- is still valid since the statistics available do not measure the majority of factors relative to discrimination on grounds of sex. In addition, much of the data is supplied in aggregate form, which prevents the effective measurement of the progress obtained in this area.

8. Significant progress is shown in the participation of women in new fields of activity, and in particular in the organization and management of small enterprises, in culture, the armed forces, finance, the institutionalization of communal participation and means of communication, among others. However, in spite of the democratic tradition of some of the countries considered, the role of women in the leadership of political parties, in parliament and in trade union affairs is limited.

9. Some of the experiences reported indicate that not only do the processes of change brought about through training and the generation of employment contribute to a rise in income but also that the status of women is benefited by the kind of self-fulfilment which leads to changes in the value put on the productive and reproductive role of the family. It also brings about changes in the traditional decision-taking patterns and in the family dynamic.

10. In spite of the changes recorded, some obstacles remain, and these have different impacts depending on the position of women in the social structure. These differences lie in such areas as socialization, the access of women to education and information, their incorporation into the labour market, the type of family they set up and the age at which they are integrated into that family, the value assigned to domestic work and their level of participation.

11. The existence of concrete experiments carried out in the various countries to eliminate these obstacles could be noted. The presence of women in production, community participation in the care of children, organized protest against the high cost of living and the application of pressure for the exercise of citizens' rights and respect for freedom and democracy are examples of the action taken by women in their social context.

12. The effect of the programmes aimed at the transformation of the rural environment by changing the technology of production have not all been positive for the rural women in the cases considered. Although women are incorporated as

/wage-earners in

wage-earners in the labour market, their participation in the decision-making process of a production unit is minimal whereas their burden of work is increasing substantially since they must play their traditional role in the reproduction of the labour force while at the same time participating actively in the search of supplementary monetary income for the survival of the family. Light is thrown on the co-existence of traditional patterns of living and of changes in the structure of production and in the work done by women.

13. The dynamic of change present in the Caribbean shows the importance of the socio-cultural context, in which family, institutions, State, style of life and the position of women are the result of a mixture of different cultures, providing specificity, not always recognized in the literature, for the application of public policies.

14. The presence and importance of women in the Caribbean family is still reflected in the many roles they play. In particular, attention should be drawn to the survival strategy, in which close relations in the family group, the neighbourhood, the community and the intermediate organizations play an important role in the flexibility shown by women in their struggle to survive in a context characterized by economic straits.

15. Another factor which should be regarded as reflecting these changes is the gradual transformation in the laws in effect with regard to women and children. Since 1975 a number of countries have introduced reforms in their civil codes to ensure equality of rights between men and women, changes in the laws relating to adoption of minors and guardianship and recognition of the labour status of women.

16. These changes often represent changes in the attitudes and values of society which are sometimes promoted by organized groups of women, who exert pressure until they achieve the changes referred to. It is likely that the presence of the Plan of Action and of the theme of women in its declaration have contributed to the changes achieved in the legal order.

17. Finally, it cannot be denied that the growth, stability and maturity of political systems is reflected in real and objective progress in connection with the role of women.

In the document cited at the beginning of this section various suggestions are made in connection with a minimum package of measures, which should be adopted to improve the social position of families and of women in particular.

These measures include: a) stable employment, with an adequate minimum income and with a place of work close to the family unit for the head of household (whether it be a man or a woman); b) programmes relating to health, housing, education and the basic service infrastructure (electricity, water, etc.); c) programmes for mass family education, aimed in particular at raising the level of information and communication of the members of the nuclear units and at combating sexual stereotypes; d) programmes for the organization of families in neighbourhood or community associations; e) adoption of legislative measures to support objective action by such programmes.

/The findings

The findings presented do not necessarily cover everything done in connection with the suggestions made in the publication cited above; however, some of the findings deserve additional comment.

The global policies applied by various countries have not helped to generate employment; on the contrary, the combination of external crisis and application of restrictive measures have led to an increase in open unemployment and underemployment (see table 2).

The absorption capacity of the informal sectors, in which a large share of the women heads of households in urban areas are employed has decreased, affecting family income.

Unemployment and the high cost of living have made income distribution more backward and deteriorated the quality of life of broad segments of the population (see tables 3, 4 and 5).

Women in the urban middle class have watched the expectations given them by advertising and publicity in respect of employment and the acquisition of housing and other consumer goods diminish.

The reduction of governmental expenditure and the increase in public service rates have had a dual effect --a deterioration in the quality of such services as water, electricity, urban sanitation and security; and a reduction in family spending capacity due to higher service costs.

The limitations on investment and public expenditure established in the adjustment programmes have prevented new investment in basic infrastructure, which affects the development of water pipes, sewers, drains, schools, health centres, cultural institutions, sports and recreation centres and other amenities.

The maximum limits imposed on social expenditure will mean that some programmes carried out on an experimental basis in connection with family education and changing attitudes and stereotypes cannot be implemented on a general basis. Thus, as frequently happens in social intervention, a lack of continuity and failure to take advantage of institutional apprenticeship will continue.

The foregoing comments make it possible to see the difficulties encountered in carrying out the minimum programme suggested in 1979. However, experience has shown a capacity to fight and to organize which should be used to its fullest to surmount the crisis and keep living conditions from deteriorating.

There are various examples of this in each national situation: the will to associate at local level, the many communal organizations and interest groups which have shown women's capacity to fight to obtain concrete solutions to specific problems relating to their neighbourhood and to environmental deterioration, personal security, citizens' rights and other issues.

Moreover, it is obvious that in each country, as a result of the action suggested in the Plan, measures of an organizational nature have been taken in public administration. Today in some form or another there are: ministries of

/Table 2

Table 2

LATIN AMERICA: RATES OF OPEN UNEMPLOYMENT IN URBAN AREAS

(Percentages)

Country	1970	1980	1982
Argentina a/	4.9	2.3	5.7
Bolivia b/	-	5.8	-
Brazil c/	6.5	6.2	7.7
Colombia d/	10.6	9.7	10.4
Costa Rica e/	3.5	6.0	10.4
Chile f/	4.1	11.7	20.1
Mexico g/	7.0	4.5	3.7
Panama h/	10.3	9.8	-
Paraguay i/	-	3.9	-
Peru j/	6.9	7.1	-
Uruguay k/	7.5	7.4	11.0
Venezuela l/	7.8	6.6	8.2
Latin America m/	6.6	5.8	7.4

Source: PREALC, Empleo y salarios, 1983, table 5, p. 10.

a/ Greater Buenos Aires. April-October average; 1982; April.
b/ National.
c/ National Employment Survey Metropolitan Areas of Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, Belo Horizonte, Porto Alegre, Salvador and Recife; 1980: June-December average; 1981, average: 12 months; 1982: January-May average.
d/ Four cities: Barranquilla, Cali, Medellín and Bogotá. 1978: March, June and December average; 1979, 1980 and 1981: March, June, September and December average; 1982: March-June average.
e/ National urban. 1978 to 1981: March-July and November average; 1982: March.
f/ Greater Santiago, INE. Four quarters average. 1982: January-October average.
g/ Metropolitan areas of Mexico City, Guadalajara and Monterrey. Four quarters average; 1982: first quarter.
h/ National non-agricultural, with exception of 1978 and 1979 which correspond to urban sector. 1978 and 1979: August; 1980: urban, advance population census 1980; 1981: urban metropolitan region.
i/ Asunción, Fernando de la Mora, Lambaré and urban areas of Luque and San Lorenzo.
j/ Metropolitan Lima. 1970: August-September; 1978: July-August; 1979: August-September; 1980: April; 1981: June.
k/ Montevideo. Average two half years except for 1982: first half.
l/ National urban. 1970: January-May, May-September, September-December average; 1978 to 1981: average two half years; 1982: first quarter.
m/ Includes only countries for which information is available for all years.

/Table 3

Table 3

LATIN AMERICA: TOTAL POVERTY

	1970	1980	2000
	Number of people (millions)		
Argentina	1.9	2.2	2.3
Brazil	46.7	52.6	65.6
Colombia	9.4	11.1	15.6
Costa Rica	0.4	0.5	0.7
Chile	1.6	1.8	2.1
Honduras	1.7	2.4	4.5
Mexico	17.4	20.2	24.3
Panama	0.6	0.7	0.9
Peru	6.7	8.6	14.7
Venezuela	2.8	3.7	6.3
Total Latin America	112	130	170
	Percentage of population		
Argentina	8	8	7
Brazil	49	43	35
Colombia	45	43	41
Costa Rica	24	22	19
Chile	17	16	14
Honduras	65	64	64
Mexico	34	29	21
Panama	39	37	32
Peru	50	49	48
Venezuela	25	24	23
Total Latin America	40	35	30

Source: ECLAC/UNDP/UNICEF, La separación de la pobreza: una tarea urgente y posible (E/CEAPL/G.1308), May 1984, p. 33.

/Table 4

Table 4

LATIN AMERICA: URBAN POVERTY

	1970	1980	2000
	Number of people (millions)		
Argentina	1.0	1.3	1.4
Brazil	19.1	25.2	40.0
Colombia	5.0	6.7	11.2
Costa Rica	0.1	0.2	0.3
Chile	1.0	1.2	1.8
Honduras	0.4	0.6	1.5
Mexico	6.8	9.3	14.8
Panama	0.2	0.3	0.7
Peru	2.5	3.4	6.3
Venezuela	1.6	2.3	4.4
Total Latin America	47	64	102
	Share of poor people in total population (%)		
Argentina	54	57	59
Brazil	41	48	61
Colombia	53	60	72
Costa Rica	26	31	38
Chile	62	67	76
Honduras	22	27	33
Mexico	39	46	61
Panama	36	44	75
Peru	37	40	43
Venezuela	57	61	70
Total Latin America	42	49	60

Source: ECLAC/UNDP/UNICEF, La superación de la pobreza: una tarea urgente y posible (E/CEPAL/G.1308), May 1984, p. 34.

/Table 5

Table 5

LATIN AMERICA: RURAL POVERTY

	1970	1980	2000
	Number of people (millions)		
Argentina	0.9	0.9	0.9
Brazil	27.6	27.4	25.6
Colombia	4.4	4.4	4.4
Costa Rica	0.3	0.3	0.4
Chile	0.6	0.6	0.5
Honduras	1.3	1.8	3.0
Mexico	10.6	10.9	9.5
Panama	0.4	0.4	0.2
Peru	4.2	5.2	8.4
Venezuela	1.2	1.4	1.9
Total Latin America	65	66	68
	Share of poor people in total population (%)		
Argentina	46	43	41
Brazil	59	52	39
Colombia	47	40	28
Costa Rica	74	69	62
Chile	38	33	24
Honduras	78	73	67
Mexico	61	54	39
Panama	64	56	25
Peru	63	60	57
Venezuela	43	39	30
Total Latin America	58	51	40

Source: ECLAC/UNDP/UNICEF, La superación de la pobreza: una tarea urgente y posible (E/CEPAL/G.1308), May 1984, p. 35.

/State, offices

State, offices at the level of the President or Prime Minister and departments in ministries whose main responsibility is to deal with matters relating to women.

The attitude and will of those responsible for government has changed as to the role of women in public life. In the past five years our societies have seen more women in high positions than in the previous half century.

The content of the message of some mass media, especially in written matter with an extensive circulation, has varied in so far as the stereotypes transmitted are concerned. Little by little the message is changing and women are depicted as less submissive and more combative.

Finally, we should not lose sight of the presence of women in the processes of democratization and structural transformation of some of our societies. Here, the traditional stereotypes have fallen apart, and the models which are emerging are oriented towards equal rights and responsibilities between the sexes. For this reason, in spite of the crisis and its impact on the standard of living, it seems that we can be optimistic since the qualitative transformations which have occurred with regard to the status of women are so profound that they will not disappear as a result of the present situation.

/III. PROSPECTS

III. PROSPECTS

A. PROBABLE FUTURE

This section will contain some considerations concerning the future, which is becoming increasingly difficult to forecast in the framework of the present circumstances which are bound to affect the way in which the region will probably develop.

As has already been noted, the impact of the present unfavourable foreign trade situation which has affected the majority of the Latin American and Caribbean countries since 1985 and is aggravated by the burden of service and amortization payments on the external debt and by the stringency of the adjustment programmes suggested by the International Monetary Fund invariably gives rise to questions as to how to overcome the present macroeconomic maladjustments in the short term. In many cases the repercussions of these measures in the medium and long term are overlooked.

Overcoming the imbalances depends on factors outside the region's control, such as the recovery of international trade; the performance of interest rates in the leading financial markets, and in particular in the United States of America; the expansion of the industrial economies and on the understanding and good political sense which must prevail in North-South relationships since there can be no doubt that problems such as external indebtedness are no longer exclusively economic problems but have become political issues with great impact on the peace and development of the region.

The climate described has an effect on any exercise relating to the future performance of the economy and society of Latin America and the Caribbean. A publication issued recently by the Inter-American Development Bank shows projections based on two hypotheses of economic growth: one in which it is possible to stop the present trend towards the deterioration of per capita consumption and another in which an increase in the number of unemployed is avoided.

With a view to completing the scenarios, a look is taken at the possible performance of exports in the period 1984-1990, based on assumptions concerning the behaviour of income and of the economic activity of the industrialized countries, which absorb two-thirds of the merchandise exported by the region; the competitiveness of the goods according to the impact of relative prices and the capacity of the supply to respond to changes in external markets. The findings show less growth of exports, and of manufactures in particular, than that shown in the 1970s; a rise in the relative prices of Latin American primary products by comparison with those from other sources, which would partially explain the slower growth rate of exports of Latin American basic commodities in relation with the world demand; the heavy pressure exerted by the recovery of international trade on the demand for Latin American exports, which shows the importance of the existence of protectionist barriers and other restrictions applied by the developed countries against exports from the third world.

/However, the

However, the figures show that the growth rate of exports is slightly higher than the interest rate forecast for external credit, which provides only for the partial alleviation of the burden of interest paid on exports.

Projections show that exports will not grow as fast as in previous decades and that the burden of the existing debt will seriously draw on foreign currency earnings in the next five years. In order to grow moderately and to halt the rise in the rates of unemployment, it would be necessary to reverse the trend in consumption and investment, and to do this, new external resources will be needed at the end of the 1980s. This means a rise in debt servicing and a substantial outflow of capital resources from the region to the rest of the world. Therefore, vigilance and control over external accounts, and in particular over the use of external resources, will be an indispensable requisite for governmental authorities.

The outlook suggested by the projections taken into consideration are that the near future will be a difficult period. The reduction observed in governmental expenditure, the limitations based on investment and the burden of the debt have drastically changed the style and quality of life of the population of the region.

It therefore seems that it may be necessary to make an effort to change the trend since the political and social stability of the region is at stake.

B. ROLE AND CONTENT OF PLANNING

The present crisis has shown more clearly than ever before the weaknesses and imperfections in the theories and also in the methodologies applied in our present planning systems.

In recent years there has been frequent criticism of the so-called normative approach devised in the mid-1950s by ECLAC, which served as a guide for the implementation of the various planning systems now in operation. Thirty years represents a substantial accumulation of experience, which has led to the natural adaptation of the principles formulated back in the 1950s; however, the effort made in this direction seems to have been insufficient for meeting the challenge now faced by Latin American society.

Among the positive factors, attention should be drawn to: the legitimization of the planning function, especially medium-term planning; the efforts to rationalize the machinery for resource allocation by adopting programme budgeting and pre-investment; the gradual introduction of the spatial physical dimension and of regional planning; and more concern for the population at the various levels of the process. The currents which may be noted include the inability to articulate short-term difficulties with medium and long-term problems; slowness in the design and formulation of strategies really aimed at overcoming the structural conditioners of development; the lack of consistency between general plans and the practical measures adopted to solve the problems identified;

/the use

the use of partial diagnoses to interpret an increasingly complex situation and the fact that social and economic planning are still regarded as separate fields when in fact the whole process is directed towards the intervention of society.

This makes it necessary to take a new look at the planning role, the content of strategies and policies and the institutional arrangements of today and to re-examine the role of the State now that, to cope with the high cost of the adjustment programmes implemented in recent years, it must assume the responsibility for ensuring that the content of strategies and policies is fair and well-balanced. Therefore, in order to keep the situation from deteriorating even further and to get back on the path to growth and development, planning must promote the changes needed in the economic, social, political and cultural structure to keep the process from degenerating and in the medium term establish conditions in which employment can expand and well-being can thrive. To do so, it will be necessary to experiment with new types of and approaches to planning in which the criticism levelled is met and a participatory and democratic mechanism really established.

C. SOCIAL POLICY

A number of recent publications have analysed the progress and limitations of social planning in the region.5/ For the purposes of this analysis, the following should be borne in mind:

1. The coverage has been marginal; the greatest effort made in the design and formulation of a plan has been concentrated on the economic and financial aspects.

2. The social experience begins with the systematization of ideas relating to education, health and social welfare, fields in which, for various reasons, information has accumulated and a certain amount of organizational experience already existed.

3. To cope with population growth, urban development and the generation of employment, a new field of interest is opening up involving the design of population policies and concern for physical planning. Where employment is concerned, and subject to existing limitations of a technical nature, this has become a common field of interest among traditional economic planners and social planners.

4. As a result of OECD thinking concerning human resources and their relationship to productivity and the growth of the product, in the mid-1970s the programming of human resources was introduced, and later on it was suggested that there might be a relationship between the training of human resources, scientific and technical development and the problems of management and administration.

5. When theories of well-being and human capital became fashionable in academic circles, some politicians began to be concerned about these matters, and, in the mid-1970s, concern for inequity, critical poverty, marginality and human rights became explicit.

/6. It

6. It is in this context that social planning acquires some relevance at the level of theory: it is justified as an instrument for combating poverty and marginality, but always in a secondary role.

7. Thus it has happened that in this past decade new fields have been brought into play including that of women and their integration into development, which emerged in the mid-1970s as a category in its own right subject to the intervention inherent in the planning process.

8. Because of the methodology used (global, sectoral and medium term), from the beginning there was a separation --a problem not totally solved-- between the economic and the social and cultural realms. For a number of years, the only link was the financial link; the amount of resources needed to cover the expenditure for the expansion of services and their implications for the sources and uses of funds. As these sectors were usually weak, they were regarded as residual and bore the brunt of the cuts and adjustments.

The preceding paragraphs contain a formal description of the process. However, an attempt to discover to what point the exercises were actually carried out might reveal that on many occasions what actually happened bore little relationship to what was contained in the normative plan. There were many reasons for this, including those pointed out at the beginning of this study. To these reasons must be added the lack of a global concept of the role assigned to what are known as "social policies" in development strategies, and herein lies the first limitation: The process as a whole is a social process so that this kind of distinction cannot be drawn. Development is first and foremost the equitable distribution of the benefits of growth; its central objective is a social objective, and to achieve it, it is necessary to design and formulate programmes and projects whose ultimate goal is the construction of a more just society.

Thus social policy viewed in the light of the crisis must take responsibility for its central objective and must clearly define its role and act on economic policy so as to ensure that it gives appropriate priority to equity and justice. This calls for the management of theoretical categories which are not very orthodox but are realistic and in line with the structural characteristics of our societies. In other words, the time has come to generate and implement our own solutions.

D. WOMEN AND SOCIAL POLICY

In the context described above, there is full justification for including the category of women as a subject of public policy; so that finally, after several decades, recognition is given to their objective position of inequality and to the need to correct it by subjecting their treatment to the rationale of the plan.

Historically, it may be said that the theme of women has, depending on the level of development of each country and its socio-historic context, been approached in three different ways:

1. Women seen as an object of assistance. Women are viewed as a social problem, as an object of public policy; emphasis is placed on the reproductive function of women. In this phase, a policy for the integration of women into development is not clearly defined. The focus is on solving health and education problems of the mother-child binomial, which results in the implementation of mother-child and other programmes in such areas as pre- and post-natal assistance, medical

/attention in

attention in early infancy, environmental enhancement and education to promote good health. This policy has proved to result in a considerable reduction in infant mortality rates.

2. The participation approach. This approach is taken in the framework of public policies oriented towards integral development through the incorporation of all sectors of the population into the production and wealth distribution processes. Women are present in plans and ideas of a global nature; there is no specificity in the definition of strategies and policies although there is greater consistency in their design and formulation. Action is not directed only towards women in their reproductive role but provides for their participation in the labour market, and they are regarded as beneficiaries of all the sectoral programming with an impact on the quality of life, housing, education, recreation and other areas.

3. The integration approach. The status of women is seen from three angles -as a crucial variable in the long- and medium-term development strategy; as an integral part of the social sector in the sectoral strategy and as an area of concentrated attention in the part bearing on the family, children and youth. This view assumes that organizational and ideological obstacles have been overcome. In the reasoning behind this approach an attempt is being made to bring about a change in the status of women, the main thrust being on the elimination of social injustice and on economic growth. The action is preferably directed towards groups living in extreme poverty, the most vulnerable members of the family group and situations where women suffer from inequality of opportunity and of participation.

As things now are in the region, the three types of approach will be found. There are countries which are still at the assistance stage, there are others in the participative stage, and a few have made efforts in the direction described with respect to the third stage. If an integral approach to the subject is to come into general use, there is need for a different concept of planning and, in particular, of social policy, which should leave off being marginal and instrumental and take a leading role in building the future.

Documents E/CEPAL/CRM.2/L.2 and L.3 issued by ECLAC in 1979 in connection with the second Regional Conference which was held at Macuto, take into consideration the possible content of public policy on the integration of women in development, and what they say seems to be as valid now as it was the day they were issued. However, the difficulties encountered in putting into practice the valuable ideas contained in these documents are a source of amazement. These difficulties are of three types. In the first place there are ideological difficulties associated with the view taken in the countries concerning their respective national projects since in some cases the position of women does not seem to be a focal point of attention; another difficulty, of an institutional nature, has to do with the absence, weakness or transitory nature of the machinery established to implement these decisions and to monitor and follow up on the public policy designed for this purpose; and the third difficulty is related to limitations of a financial nature, which have made it necessary to revise commitments made with respect to programmes and projects with a social content.

/IV. SUGGESTIONS

IV. SUGGESTIONS FOR A NEW PLAN OF ACTION

A. THE POINT OF DEPARTURE

On the basis of the information analysed, the following conclusions may be drawn:

1. Achievements in the socioeconomic area are to a certain extent independent of the existence of the Plan of Action, since progress in education, health and welfare have been noted to be a result of actions begun before the Plan came into existence officially.

2. However, for decades interest groups, international bodies, Governments and various institutions had been pressuring for recognition and legitimization of the topic of women's status. Because of this, the topic was gradually incorporated and later treated as a planning category, an object of social policy.

3. The Plan of Action represents a regional coming of awareness, which consolidates the proposals and opens new possibilities for action by groups and Governments in favour of the integration of women into development.

4. This integration has been gradual. There have been different levels of complexity in treatment of the topic, in terms of the evolution of different societies and planning systems. Given the fact that some experiences have been very recent, it is difficult to know with certainty whether the changes have resulted from the action planned, or whether on the contrary they would have occurred even without the Plan.

5. Furthermore, the crisis context conspires against the progress achieved. The content of adjustment programmes acts against justice and equity, which are the expression of development; as a result, the population must be made aware of the structural changes which must occur if the difficulties are to be successfully overcome.

6. These changes must occur at the different levels of society, and therefore require new forms of planning which will overcome past criticisms; a development policy which is truly social; a more participatory and democratic society; and international consensus, which is a requirement for establishing and maintaining peace, as a necessary, but not sufficient, condition of development.

B. SPECIFIC ACTION TO BE TAKEN

In order gradually to modify the methods and systems applied in the area of planning, we must go from traditional normative approaches to a dynamic view that is more in keeping with the complex situation existing today in the region. To this end it will be necessary to incorporate elements of situational planning,

/strategical planning

strategical planning or other types of planning currently being elaborated, so as to concretize the link between the planner and policy, theory and practice, by overcoming the traditional differences among the economic, social, cultural and political fields on the one hand, and the short, medium and long term on the other.

Given the nature of its objectives, development strategy must be social: development is understood to be an ordered and rational process of changing the structures of a society, and if this society clearly displays symptoms of injustice and inequality, planning will consist of rational intervention aimed at correcting the situation through policies, programmes and projects.

As a result, the central aim of the strategy will be to resolve the negative economic situation while ensuring that the measures proposed are equitable and just. This will involve discarding traditional solutions and implementing our own. Thus, adjustment and stabilization must be contrasted with adjustment and development, for which it will be necessary to break with the restrictive policies adopted and proceed towards moderate growth.6/

With this central aim, the egalitarian conception of development approaches the full range of the new planning categories, in which the situation of women has an important place. We have seen that incorporating a new category involves overcoming various types of obstacles, among which are the following: a) limitations in diagnostic studies. In the case of women, we have seen the lack of information on women's situation in society, her class position, and the factors conditioning her full insertion into the development process which arise from her situation; b) theoretical limitations in interpreting the complex demographic and psychosocial relationships to the productive process; or the practical limitations in making plans viable; c) limitated human and organizational resources for implementing efficient and timely solutions. In order to achieve the proper integration of women into development, these limitations must be overcome.

The changes proposed extend to the State and other social structures. In a democratic society, development implies aware and voluntary participation; the State must therefore fully assume its various roles of planner, promoter, distributor, investor, entrepreneur, regulator and financial agent, always taking care that there is due participation. This also makes it necessary to change other institutions, such as the family, the churches, political parties and labour unions, among others.

In another area, it should be pointed out that achieving development will also require a change in international relations, a new North-South dialogue which will make possible true participation by the developing countries and promote changes in the structure of multilateral bodies, so that they will be able to collaborate more actively in solving the new problems raised by the crisis.

/C. WOMEN'S

C. WOMEN'S STATUS AND THE CRISIS

In the analysis of the situation of Latin American women and their families upon which this paper is based, we have seen the effects of variables such as urbanization, industrialization, rural-urban migration, information and education, family planning and legal changes, on the situation of women, taking into account the three diagnostic elements suggested by ECLAC in documents E/CEPAL/CRM.2/L.2 and E/CEPAL/CRM.2/L.3, i.e.: the type of social group made up by women; the structural relationship between domestic work, predominantly done by women, and productive work; and the nature of sexual stereotypes and their discriminatory effects, which are in general negative for the status of women.

Furthermore, intense and contradictory social pressures will probably arise in the future and will influence the diagnostic categories mentioned above in different ways; this will make it necessary to propose a new pattern of relationships among those categories.

The family, in its various forms (according to its class position and the type of society), will continue to fulfil its many functions, among which are: reproduction of the species, productive functions through its participation in the work force and the creation of wealth; socialization of its new members; consumption, saving and investment; mobilization and participation of its components in intermediate groups and entities aimed at changing social conditions. These, among others, are the functions inherent in the family unit which make it a potential subject of specific policies aimed at strengthening it. However, the changes noted, such as differences in assignment of roles, greater participation of women in the work force, equitable distribution of domestic tasks, and efficient administration of the family budget, lead one to believe that the crisis may act as a mechanism for accelerating, delaying or phasing out tasks and functions particular to the family group.

The progress achieved in the area of incorporation into the work force is tending to stagnate, given the general situation, and in some cases is losing ground. The regressive income distribution will make the lives of poor urban and rural women more difficult. The loss of purchasing power of the real wage through inflation will affect the growing expectations of middle-class women; the increase in the number of unemployed and underemployed will have effects on the psychosocial balance of couple relationships and separations and divorces may increase as a result. Imbalances in the family structure may affect some of the family's basic functions, such as socialization. This may have a negative influence on the future performance of its members, in aspects such as education, communication and interpersonal relationships. All of the negative circumstances noted above may lead to the organized mobilization of women in defense of their rights, and to a probable situation of conflict between women and the structures which they feel are acting against their aspirations. The policies which must be designed to achieve a true adjustment with development must therefore be coherent. By way of example, below is a list of some types of measures which should be adopted to achieve the necessary consistency among global, sectoral and target-group policies in the areas of family, children and youth.

/1. Global

1. Global policy measures

Development strategy aims at designing a programme enabling the necessary adjustment to be carried out in a fair, and therefore gradual way. To this end, policies concerning exchange rates, commercial prices, foreign investment and wages should take into account their effect on the population, especially the low-income population. In this respect the following alternatives may be considered: an administrated price system as opposed to the market as the sole regulator; differential exchange systems, minidevaluations or gradual systems versus lineal maxidevaluations, for the purpose of lessening the effects on the prices of articles of popular consumption; progressive and gradual adjustments in prices of and duties on goods and public services; fair wage claims instead of wage freezes; apportioning and channeling foreign investment into selected fields.

Therefore, instead of a contraction in aggregate demand, we propose a moderate expansion of demand through changes in consumption and investment, both public and private. To respond to the increase in demand, policies for promoting production must be revised, especially in the area of import substitutions, promotion of non-traditional exports and the vertical integration of productive processes, taking into account the comparative advantages of each society.

The most important goal is an equitable distribution of the burden of the adjustment among the different segments of the population, taking care not to allow the situation of women to deteriorate. To this end, those priorities assigned to public expenditure which involve the promotion of human capital and welfare must be respected.

2. Sectoral policy measures

Sectoral priorities arise naturally from the global proposals aimed at protecting the progress achieved by women. In this case the following are important: expansion of employment, as a result of incentives to supply, equality of opportunities and fair wages; the education and training of women workers; traditional sectoral actions associated with health, housing, environmental sanitation, public services, culture and recreation, among other aspects. These actions should be aimed especially towards the poor urban and rural sectors, and should result in the forming of a social infrastructure which gives special priority to women by facilitating their mobilization and participation in new activities.

3. Target-group policies: family, children and youth

In a strategy such as the one being proposed, the family becomes a central point for social policy and will benefit from changes in global and sectoral policies. However, a special effort should be made to formulate a family policy which considers the family as a social unit, made up of a complex pattern of social relationships that varies according to the level of development of the society in which the family is inserted. If that society is confronting a crisis,

/everything must

everything must be done to help this family unit face it as well as possible. Important aspects in this respect are family orientation and consumer services, cottage-industry training, mobilization in favour of just causes, greater participation in public activities and shared decisions for the benefit of the community.

Public policies for children and youth are also necessary as a complement to policies on the family; however, care must be taken that these policies truly reach the low-income strata.

A set of measures such as those mentioned above makes it necessary to grant specific functions to the different agents composing society and, especially, requires the political will necessary to implement them properly.

D. CONDITIONS AND POLICY ALTERNATIVES

Below is a summary of some of the policy measures which could be adopted in order to attain due participation in development. The following assumptions have been made in formulating these measures:

a) The State plays the role of guide in a process of adjustment and development.

b) A truly democratic State favours the aware and voluntary participation of its members.

c) The central objective of development policy is equity.

d) Development strategy implies the design, formulation and implementation of consistent measures encompassing economic, social, cultural and political dimensions.

e) As a result, there is no conceptual difference between the economic and social spheres; the entire process is social.

f) It is recognized that women contribute to society, that their situation displays specific features and that there is a need to increase their participation, and that they should therefore be given due priority.

g) The family is a central element in development strategy.

h) Development leads to the reduction of social tensions and therefore to a lessening of conflicts and a fostering of peace.

There is no doubt that, in the framework of a strategy such as the one being proposed, women and families play a very important role. In 1985 the female population of the region will be close to 198 million; of these women, 115 million will be between the ages of 15 and 64. On the one hand, women represent a significant force in the orientation of individual and family consumption. Their

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capacity for saving can create the financial resources necessary for investment. Rationalization of their spending can affect the behaviour of imports. Their active participation in defense of the family budget can be an excellent weapon in the fight against inflation. A more efficient use of public services can help them to be more effective and therefore lead to the reduction of the fiscal deficit. On the other hand, with regard to the components of global supply, a substantial portion of the female population will enter the work force and as a result will act directly on the production of goods and services, in addition to contributing to the development of the economy in general through domestic work, although this work is not recognized in national accounts. The experience of several countries has also shown that cottage-industry production, through co-operatives, is viable in increasing and diversifying exports.

The following are necessary in order to achieve the true integration and participation of women in the processes described above: recognition by global strategy of the importance of women and the family; maintenance and strengthening of sectoral support policies and elimination of the critical points noted, such as scope, welfare-oriented content, management of difficulties, low participation and others; development of an integral policy which encompasses target groups --family, children and youth-- designed according to the specific features of each society.

By way of conclusion to this paper, some policies may be suggested to give priority to women and the family in the development process.

In the short term, one objective would be to protect the income of women and families in low socio-economic conditions through job maintenance and creation; access to a set of basic products at reasonable prices, and the organization of the community to receive and lend voluntary services. Actions aimed at raising the standard of living should not be neglected: some of these are the construction of a social infrastructure, improvement of the educational system's capacity to retain students, expansion of the coverage of the primary health care network, facilitation of access to culture and the orientation of the communications media towards changing sexual stereotypes present in the lowest strata of society. With regard to the so-called middle classes, the most important objective would be to avoid the deterioration of their quality of life. To this end, housewives should be organized into consumption co-operatives, speculation should be denounced, consumption of goods and services should be rationalized, and their demands should be articulated through a community of interests. All of this should be done in the interest of reducing the effects of the price increases on the real wage.

In the medium and long term, and once the economic situation has been resolved, efforts should be directed towards development, understood in the terms discussed in this paper. This entails stable and well-paid employment, expansion of services, more education and better health, training of female workers, greater access to the decision-making level in organizations and political parties, and greater participation in actions aimed at changes in the situation of women. To this end the programmes and projects formulated should incorporate past experiences in order to respond coherently to the desires and aspirations of women and achieve for women and society the right to a fair life and greater opportunities for development.

/V. TOWARDS

V. TOWARDS THE FUTURE

In conclusion, the following hypotheses may be drawn from the material contained in this study.

The profound changes recorded in the region in the past three decades have affected the entire population but affect social groups, and in particular young people and women, to different degrees.

Changes in the status of women, when they have occurred, are more closely tied to global changes than to policies or action directed specifically at women.

An example of this is the access of women to education, in particular at the basic and middle levels, due to the expansion of the educational system. (Although there are still differences in the access to higher and technical education.)

In some cases technology is responsible for improvements in the status of women in that it gives them access to higher levels of monetary income. However, this is not always reflected in a better quality of life and has resulted in gradual proletarization of many groups of women.

There have also been profound changes in the countryside-city relationship, including the emergence of a monetized rural middle class, which cultivates specialized crops yielding high profits. As a result of the gradual proletarization of large groups, some rural family members are leaving in search of wage-earning work in the urban centres or in other farms. As a consequence, women are assuming an increasingly important role in socialization and in the reproduction of the rural family.

In the city, another significant change is occurring: already more than one generation has been born of the migratory flows which took place in the 1960s and 1970s. The second generation of women are different from those in the first generation in respect of their access to education, the urban labour market and means of communication; there are also differences in the values they have adopted in respect of family and couple relationships, which is one of the most significant cultural changes to have occurred in the region.

The big population movements, whether within countries or among them, have had an impact on the structure and composition of the labour force and on the production apparatus. In this process, women have shown great ability to adapt and participate.

Public policies aimed at women have been characterized by focal or experimental activity, the content of which has been traditional in respect to the role of women; this is reflected in the small impact they have had in respect of the action taken by women and their significance as agents of change.

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In some countries the laws relating to the family and to women have been subject to basic and substantive changes in so far as two basic principles are concerned --equality of the woman within the couple and equality of children, independently of the kind of union of their parents. Consideration is no longer given exclusively to social rights, and human rights have begun to be taken into account. Policies for the integration of women have run up against conceptual controversies and structural problems in that they are associated with the socio-political structures of a particular system, and different structures produce different systems. Terms such as "integration", "development" and "egalitarian participation" have different meanings and values in each context. However, there are two structures which model policies related to women: governments, which take note of the demands or aspirations of social groups and design policies directed towards them, and social organizations, which give expression to problems relating to their specific experience. In the case of Latin America, no substantial "modernization" process seems to have emerged from governmental action to enhance the status of women and to promote their active participation as a pre-requisite of development. The alternatives for the future still lie within the framework of modernization, although new challenges are now arising.

The elements referred to in this paper have significance for the near future which will be characterized by options derived from the crisis to which reference has been made throughout this study.

The first option consists in deciding whether to continue applying the economic growth and distribution model which characterized the past three decades and which, as has been seen, has not responded to the social demands of the majority of the population. The kind of growth it fosters is not viable because of the financial and other limitations already referred to.

The second option is to adopt a new concept of the State, which will enable the citizenry to develop on an egalitarian basis. In other words, a State in which organized groups have access to the determination of the rules of the game, in which shared values facilitate the kind of participation which gives power to the citizenry and in which socialization on the part of the family becomes a real strategy of democratization.

In this way, the transformation of the roles of young people in the population, and especially of young women, may be a key to the harmonization of the public and private sectors and of the small and big decisions of daily life, and may help to create more links between the citizenry and the State so that the role of young people as a primary subject of political action may be revitalized. At present patterns of communication shared between different social groups which, owing to the crisis, have become allies are coming into existence. Consideration should also be given to the fact that the younger generations tend to let immediate concerns overshadow long-term possibilities.

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Viewed from this perspective, the family will acquire new dimensions. Interpersonal relationships will be much less based on sex, age and the role of the family members; the family will stop being a recipient of services and will become a unit generating decisions; the characteristics of each type of family will be taken into account when policies are formulated and designed.

Women will play different roles depending on their age. Older women, who received the initial impact of the changes made, will be subject to more pressure than the others. For instance, the preservation of the double- and triple-work-day appears to be an insurmountable obstacle. Their contribution will be to experience and internalize this pressure, which will relax when the next generations are socialized.

Young women will benefit the most from the possibilities of change in the future. Their values will have to change so that the concept of unilateral authority will be replaced by the kind of solidarity, which will make it possible to put social relationships on a more human basis. Their participation in society will be led by people who are actively involved in the search for solutions rather than being confined to the role of critic. By demanding concrete solutions to the problem of the quality of life, they will become an important force in the orientation of social expenditure; this may result in conflict in cases where expectations are so high that they cannot be met by the model in use.

The changes suggested can be made in the framework of a democratic society which can be achieved by taking different options, which should respect the principle of participation and the mechanism which make it possible. It is in the process of participation that civil goals and political goals may clash, leading to the emergence of new types of negotiation in which women will be dealt with on equal terms.

However, it will be preferable for participation to take place in the context of a civic society with a territorial base. This is a weakness in view of the trend observed in recent decades for participation to take place basically through political organizations under State influence.

A propicious climate for the strengthening of a democratic society is a climate of peace. Today peace is threatened by various phenomena including the increasing nationalism of the countries, which may give rise to border disputes; the indebtedness of some countries as a result of military expenditure in spite of the express will of the region to oppose the arms race and the conflicts existing in some sectors because of the inability of the model now in use to meet the expectations generated.

Regional integration and solidarity become key elements of the new strategy. The existence of organized groups of women who have met the political and ideological problem in a spirit of solidarity, in an ethical approach and as defenders of human rights, is an example of the possibilities open to women in this field. An example of this is the group known as Las Madres de la Plaza de Mayo (Argentina), who as mothers and grandmothers systematically demanded

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the right to life under a régime in which that right was denied, thereby eliciting solidarity throughout the region. Thus, the common search for solutions to common problems should be carried out in a spare of solidarity. In a situation of sensitivity and vulnerability, complementarity, in which reciprocal concessions are made in respect both of ideas and of tactics, should be adopted as a strategy, thereby limiting the practice of hegemony by a State or States and opening the way to different kinds of integration into the social structure.

This possibility points to the importance of women in the formation of an antiwar mentality which prefers negotiation to conflict. Their future role in support of regional integration and peace would give their own special function, helping to ensure that the region's problems are solved within the region, with maximum reliance on its own potential.

Notes

1/ CEPAL, "The situation of women in Latin America and the Caribbean with regard to the implementation of the Regional Plan of Action" (E/CEPAL/CRM.2/L.2), Santiago, Chile, October 1979 and "Contributions to the diagnosis and promotion of the integration of women into the development of Latin America and the Caribbean" (E/CEPAL/CRM.2/L.3), 25 October 1979.

2/ CEPAL, "Report of the Fifth Meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on the Integration of Women into the Economic and Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean" (E/CEPAL/CRM.3/L.2), Santiago, Chile, August 1983, and "Latin America: Analysis of social problems relating to women in various sectors" (E/CEPAL/CRM.3/L.7).

3/ CEPAL, "The situation of women in Latin America and the Caribbean with regard to the implementation of the Regional Plan of Action", op. cit.

4/ CEPAL, Five studies on the situation of women in Latin America, Estudios e Informes de la CEPAL, No. 16 (E/CEPAL/G.1217), Santiago, Chile, September 1982.

5/ Ramón Piñango and Mercedes Pulido de Briceño, "La política social de la democracia venezolana", Revista SIC, Vol. XLII, No. 419, November 1979, Caracas, Venezuela; Rolando Franco, "Planificación social: problemas y perspectivas", Revista Interamericana de Planificación, No. 68, December 1983; Pedro Demo, "Indagaciones críticas sobre la teoría y la práctica de la planificación social", Revista Interamericana de Planificación, No. 68; Maritza Izaguirre Porras, "Las políticas sociales: el caso venezolano", CENDES, mimeographed document, Caracas, 1984.

6/ René Villarreal, La contrarrevolución monetarista. Teoría, política económica e ideología del neoliberalismo, Editorial Océano, Mexico, 1983. Maritza Izaguirre Porras, Las lecciones de la crisis, CENDES, mimeographed publication, Caracas, 1984.